

Star Fox: The Omega Chronicles: Book 1: Lylat Wars

by The Broken Shogun

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Summary: Book 1: Lylat Wars. Lylat is at war and a love forged by the hardships of war. Fox X Krystal and John-117 X Cortana Story was formerly Star Fox: Alpha and Omega, but has now become The Omega Chronicles, due to the fact it's going to have multiple stories

1. Aftermath on the Great Fox

****So, starting my Star Fox story. I hope I can get some reviews with advice on what to change and what not to change. The Halo story is probably just dead in the water now. Anyway, I hope I can do better with this one, might only update once a week, so I can make the chapters longer in this one. so...on to the story!****

****Disclaimer: I don't own Star Fox, wish I did though****

One week has passed since the crisis on Dinosaur Planet, recently renamed Sauria, was averted by the Star Fox team, or at least, what it was then. The mercenary unit had spread apart, with the Great Fox, the Star Fox team's mothership and home base, falling into a state of disrepair, the navigation robot, ROB/NUS64 following suite. The Star Fox team had been waiting for a job to come up, and they were ecstatic when General Pepper, leader of the Cornerian Army, had called in with a proposition for them.

Fox McCloud, the teams leader, Slippery Toad, the mechanic, and Peppy Hare, father figure of the team, listened intently as Pepper explained the mission. It wasn't exactly what the team was best for, but it wasn't an impossible job for them either. Fox spent the next few days travelling the main planet, and the chunks that had been breaking way from the mother body.

Over the course of the journey, Fox made many new allies, Prince Tricky of the Earthwalker tribe in particular, and also setting his sights on a beautiful blue vixen while returning a Krazoa spirit, one

of the magical entities that aided in holding Sauria together, to Krazoa Palace. Tricky hadn't been able to join the orange vulpine, so it was just Fox, and the blue mystery vixen. Although, there was one problem: she was trapped, ironically enough, in a large crystal. Fox would later learn her name after freeing her.

As soon as he had freed her, he learned the source of the trouble. Andross, the simian that had killed his father, had been resurrected. Fox had killed the giant ape, who had apparently taken a liking to the appearance of just a large floating head and two hands, during The Lylat Wars eight years prior. Fox had followed the evil scientist into space in his Arwing, engaging him in a battle not unlike the first one with the monkey. Eventually, it seemed as if Fox was about to meet his end, sucked into the tooth filled mouth of the man who wasn't satisfied with just taking James' McCloud's life, but his son's as well. Fox had resigned to the worst when he heard a beep in his communicator. He looked at the screen, which remained dark, but he heard the familiar voice of a cocky blue falcon. "Hey McCloud, different time, different planet, and you still need Falco's help. Its good to see ya buddy!" He heard Falco Lombardi, the team's ace pilot, who had left prior to the current events to pursue a life that was different, but never managing to find the thrill that being with Team Star Fox gave him. The Avian and Vulpine worked Andross' strength down, eventually getting in a lucky blow and watching as the simian exploded in their rear displays, rocketing away from the blast area as quickly as they could back to the Great Fox.

The team was back in the same place, but Fox, Peppy, and Slippy were all saddened at the thought that Falco may leave again. They were surprised to see the elevator door to the bridge open, the falcon stepping in and flashing a cocky smile at his friends. "Hey guys, you don't mind if I hang with you again, do ya?" Fox crossed his arms, smirking at his friend "Sure Falco, it's great to have you back" Slippy was overjoyed at this. "The Star Fox team is back together again!" Peppy's eyes widened as if he was remembering something. "Oh, Fox! I almost forgot! I received this message from Krystal..." The old hare put the message on the bridge's main holopanel, the vixen from before showing up as a hologram. The voice came through, a slight British type accent showing through her grateful words. "Hi, Fox, I really appreciate what you did for me. I'm just so sorry we didn't get much of a chance to talk. I'm left with just one more thing to do." A thump resounded through the Dreadnaught's hull, The team looked around, then heard the door to the bridge hiss open, the blue vixen slowly walking into the room, a smile on her face s she finished her statement. "And that's to say...Thank you" She finished the sentence and moved towards the team. Fox felt his ears burn with embarrassment as he scratched his neck nervously. "Well uh, OK, I mean, sure, no problem!" A laugh escaped the little green toad next to Fox. "Your not shy, are you Fox?" He croaked out, a hint of amusement in his voice.

Falco poked his old friend and wing mate in the ribs with an elbow as ROB piped in for the first time. "My sensors indicate Fox's temperature is rising, are you okay, Fox?" The team and the vixen had all began to laugh as the robot had unknowingly let the secret out that Fox was indeed very shy around Krystal. Fox quickly saved himself with one last comment. "I'm gonna be just fine" He stated, smiling at the vixen next to him, Krystal returning the smile.

The week passed as Krystal got settled into her room on the Great

Fox. One morning, as she was getting up, a little late due to staying up late the night prior, she wandered into the kitchen, where her new team mates were eating breakfast. Fox perked up as she entered the room, his tail flicking around for a moment excitedly. "Good morning, Krystal" He said, smiling and pointing at the empty seat at the table, where a plate of food awaited the blue vixen. "She smiled happily and sat down to enjoy the meal, taking a bite, then her eyes began to grow. "Whats wrong?" Fox asked, wondering if she was okay. Krystal swallowed the mouth full of food and grinned at him. "This is delicious! Who made it?" Slippy began to bounce in his seat, waving his hand in the air. "Me! Me!" Krystal smiled at the little green toad. "Slippy, this is great!"

The mechanic began to blush, his squeaky voice uttering out something about her being to nice about it. Krystal smiled at him for a few more seconds before going back to the plate in front of her. After a while, the team had finished their meal and moved to the Casual room, where they would relax between missions, or in peacetime, they would just sit around and watch TV, read, or anything else. ROB's metallic monotone came over the speakers. "Entering Corneria's atmosphere in one hour" The room eventually cleared out, leaving Fox and Krystal alone together, beginning to talk about any random subject. Fox began the conversation. "So, Krystal, when we get to Corneria, We're moving off of the Great Fox for awhile, and into our planet side home." Krystal grinned at Fox. "I'm finally getting to see Corneria after you guys have told me so much about it?" The orange vulpine returned the grin. "Yes, and you'll love it!" The two continued to talk for awhile, eventually losing track of time and getting interrupted by ROB again.

"Atmospheric entry is imminent, prepare for planetary gravity influence" The two foxes stood to go to the bridge and join the rest of the team there, arriving within seconds. Falco began making snide remarks as the ship began to shake, turbulence rocking even the dreadnaught, despite the powerful stabilizers it had equipped.

The moments ticked by as they entered the turbulent stratosphere, then eased off into the lowest portion of the protective bubble encasing the planet. Krystal continued to smile as she stared out the windows of the bridge, admiring the blue planet. It was mostly covered in water, the cities located on large islands with small black lines indicating bridges from island to island, but they were falling into disrepair due to the fact that most vehicles now were able to hover.

Fox had moved to the command console, speaking to a walrus on the communicator. "Great Fox, requesting permission to land." The voice came through, giving them their orders. "Permission granted, Dock at hangar 317" The voice cut out as the transmission ended, Fox changing the coordinates, the dreadnaught shuddering as the engines roared to change course. The ship had rumbled, tearing a swath through the air as it angled it's way to the surface, into an extremely large hangar designated for Battleship and Carrier class vessels. The Great Fox was barely able to make it to the hangar, as it needed repairs on almost every aspect of the ship. It finally shuddered into place, hissing as hydraulic systems finally collapsed. Until it was to be renovated, the ship was grounded. As the team exited their crumbling ship, they moved as a small group into the terminal, only military personell inside due to it being a military air base. Through the sea of fatigues, the team saw a red flash, quickly moving towards them.

Fox grinned and moved towards the large hound striding towards them, embracing him as soon as they reached each other. "General Pepper, it's great to see you!" Fox exclaimed, grinning. The general, a yellow-brown bloodhound in a red military uniform, covered in medals, smiled at Fox. "I can return the feeling Fox, it's been too long since we last saw each other." The rest of the team did as Fox did, and then the Hound finally saw Krystal, removing his hat and extending his hand towards her. "Ma'am, you must be Krystal. I am General Pepper, Cornerian military commander."

The cerulean vixen blushed through her fur, smiling at General pepper. "It's a pleasure to meet you General" She stated, taking his hand and shaking it shyly. Pepper continued to grin at the team. "I have already made preparations to get your bags to your home here. A car is outside waiting for you, my own limo. Would any of you mind if I joined you on the journey?" Fox shook his head, waving his hand. "It would be our pleasure, General" Pepper nodded and returned his hat to his head, smiling and nodding. "Then let us go." The old war veteran turned on his heel and led the mercenary unit outside, opening the door to his limo for the team.

After everybody had gotten into their seats, Pepper rapped his knuckles against the window separating the driver from the occupants, indicting he could drive now. "So, Fox, how did the mission on dinosaur planet go?" He asked, looking at the mercenary commander. Fox spent the next 20 minutes reciting the events surrounding the crumbling planet, that had since been restored to normal. Fox then looked to Krystal upon finishing and asked her what she had seen throughout her time on the saurian inhabited planet. Krystal closed her eyes halfway, as if going through the events of it in her mind.

She took a deep breath and began to recount her time on the planet. "I had received a distress call originating from the planet, as my own home planet was destroyed not too long before by the giant enemy you faced after saving me, his name was Andross, wasn't it? I had returned one of the spirits after getting an explanation from one of the downed soldiers, and I went and returned it. Not too long after, I was pushed into the beam of light leading the spirits to the top of the palace. It embedded me into a crystal, ironic, I know, but it was slowly sucking the energy from me. Then, Fox saved me. That's basically how my time on the planet was spent" she ended, smiling shyly. They felt the car come to a stop, looking out and seeing the Star Fox team's home away from the Great fox

Pepper handed each team member a key, opening the door and nodding to each as they got out. Fox led the team to the house and slid the key in, unlocking the door and opening it, leading his team inside as the day ended.

2. Fox's decision

** Okay, I got some advice on how to improve my stories, now I hope I can utilize them correctly, so extra thanks to James R. O'Neill. Now, on to the story.**

** Disclaimer: don't own Star Fox or anything in it.**

The system's star, Lylat, was just edging over Corneria's horizon.

Fox was wrapped in a fuzzy dream, as well as the sheets and blankets in his bed. Within moments it was all shattered as his alarm went off, a loud buzzing sound that would alternate between the buzzing and nothing. Fox groaned, reaching for the small metal clock, the blood red numbers pulsing in time with the alarm. After slapping at it for a few moments, hitting the wooden table it was sitting on, he finally managed to stop it. The orange vulpine sat up and yawned, looking outside at the slowly rising sun and muttering under his breath about having to get up so early.

Fox stretched, slowly sliding out of bed and groggily stumbling to his closet, grabbing a random pair of pants and shirt. After he looked at each article of clothing he picked out, he saw that he had grabbed a white collared shirt, with short sleeves and a front pocket with the crimson symbol of a red fox running, a wing jutting out of its back. He slipped it on, then began to fumble with the cargo pants, black, white, and grey camo, and finally got them situated on himself. They were slightly baggy, so he tucked his shirt in and grabbed a belt, slipping it into the belt loops and tightening it.

He stretched and popped his neck, rubbing his eyes. Fox moved to his door and twisted the knob, opening it and walking down the hall. A door opened behind him, squeaking loudly, but quieting as the person opening the door slowed the opening. Falco emerged from the room, shutting the white door behind him. He yawned as well, rubbing the sleep from his eyes, shifting the crimson feathers around his eyes, then groaning as he fixed them back. Fox's wingmate and best friend had emerged from the room in a black tank top and jeans. He waved a wing at Fox, sliding down the banner of the stairs and into the kitchen, opening the refrigerator to look for something to eat.

Fox rolled his eyes, knowing that Falco had a habit of eating whatever he saw that looked appealing, whether it was cold or not. The squadron commander padded softly down the wooden steps, feeling certain steps creak and sag from little use. The house had been around for a few years, but the team rarely used it, preferring the well known corridors of the Great Fox. As he reached the landing at the ground floor, he looked over to see Falco tossing a large square box into the trashcan sitting in the pantry. The squadron had ordered pizza the night before and the blue and crimson avian had just finished it off.

Fox's feet felt cold stepping across the linoleum in the kitchen, reaching into one of the oak cabinets sitting just about a foot from the counter top and grabbing a box of cereal, latching onto a bowl as well. Letting the two items rest on the counter, he wrapped his paw around one of the handles for the refrigerator, peering inside the steel box that held most of their food. Finally spotting the milk and pulling it out.

He was still a bit groggy as he poured the cereal into the bowl, frowning at the bland, flavorless shapes sitting there. He thought inwardly to himself about shopping for more food, at least, some that had flavor in it, pouring the milk in and returning everything to where it was. He thought for a moment and reached back into the refrigerator and grabbed a bag of sugar out of the depths of the chilled confines of one of the drawers, dipping a spoon in and then sprinkling it on his cereal. Fox smiled to himself at how clever he had thought he was as he replaced the bag from where it had

come.

Dipping the spoon into the bowl, he gently carried it to the oak table sitting just outside of the kitchen. Four chairs were placed, one on each side, all made of the exact same type of material as the table. As Fox finally took his seat, he raised the spoon to his muzzle and stopped as his ear twitched. He lowered the spoon and began to listen. He could hear a soft knocking on one of the doors upstairs. He stood and tiptoed to the banister at the bottom of the stairs, looking up he could see that Slippy was waiting at the door of the room where Krystal was staying. Within a few moments, the blue vixen had opened the door, a puzzled look s to what Slippy needed. Fox's sensitive hearing picked up on the conversation that Slippy was starting.

"Krystal, have you settled in well?" The toad looked concerned, Krystal already knowing from the frog's demeanor that if anything was wrong, he would quickly do his best to make it more comfortable for her. She smiled softly at the little mechanic, speaking in little more than a whisper. "Yes Slippy, everything is perfect. Thank you for asking" She said, a hint of amusement in her voice. Slippy perked up and smiled. "If you need anything, I'll be downstairs" He ended with a cheery tune in his voice. Krystal closed the door behind him as he stared down the stairs at Fox, bouncing down to meet him.

He greeted his wing mate with a smile and a wave and bounded into the kitchen to prepare his own meal. Falco was already gone, his motorcycle's trademark roar upon ignition having almost scared Fox senseless, but had soon faded to a distant purr, and then into nothing at all. He knew the bird was off to find Katt Monroe, a pinkish feline pilot that had aided them during the Lylat Wars, assisting with their assault on Zoness and then even dropping in out of nowhere to help protect the Great Fox from missiles that had targeted it in an ambush in Sector Z after enemies had knocked out its systems with an electronic pulse.

Fox sighed and went back to his cereal, poking at it with his spoon and taking a few bites, then just stopping his involvement with the grain based breakfast food altogether. He got rid of the cereal, to Slippy's dismay at wasting an almost full bowl of cereal. Fox knew he should be eating more, having only eaten indigenous plants while on Sauria. He hadn't liked the taste going in, or the after taste the Dumbledang pods would leave in his mouth. He shivered at the memory of the first time he had eaten one. Tricky had been a little worried after he had heard Fox gagging after eating one, the little triceratops whimpering in concern at the vulpine.

Fox made his way into the main room of the house, where numerous gaming systems wee situated around a single tv. His footsteps not making a single sound as he padded into the room. The hardwood floor was cold against his bare feet, but he didn't really notice it, just happy that he was out of his combat boots for the first time in a two weeks.

The squadron commander plopped onto the couch, turning on the plasma screen and sifting through the channels. Finding nothing, he groaned at how boring his house was now. He missed the Great Fox already, and could already assume that Falco didn't find much enthusiasm in staying at the house either. That was probably why he left, if not just to see Katt.

Now Fox began to wonder: How was Katt? Or Bill Gray, his old friend from back in the academy. He and the dog soldier had competed for grades while keeping a close friendship. The Lylat Wars held memories of so many of his old friends, but he hadn't seen those friends in eight years. Eight long years. He knew the dog had become a squadron commander in the Cornerian Army as well, and held command of the base on Katina, a planet not too far out from Corneria.

Fox wondered what it was like to be in command of a base full of soldiers. He pondered on the question that General Pepper had asked him when the Great Fox had re-entered Cornerian air space, victorious in the Star Fox team's invasion of Venom, Andross's base of operations during the war. He remembered it clearly, thinking back, he wondered if he should change his decision on what the general had said.

Fox closed his eyes and then, within moments, opened them again. He was back in the Cornerian military headquarters, looking at the steel door in front of him. He looked down to observe his attire. He was back in his green flight suit as well, the tan colored flight jacket hugging his shoulders, the blaster holster tight against his leg with its meager pistol sitting snugly inside. Peppy spoke up, nudging Fox with a wrinkled paw. "Fox, it's time" Fox nodded as he began his short journey to the doors.

The moment he reached it, the titanium bulkhead slid apart silently, thudding as it stopped in place after fully opening. Hundreds of Cornerian soldiers were standing in formation, even in the small room. Fox estimated that they were the size of a standard infantry battalion, consisting of three to four hundred soldiers, all stuck in a rock solid salute. He looked past the sea of green and blue uniforms to see the trademark crimson of a general, and there was only one of those. He slowly led his team down the red carpeted hall, feeling hundreds of eyes glued to him and burning into him. Fox could hear the sound of one single breath, noticing that all the soldiers were breathing in unison. It unsettled him a bit, but eventually it was drowned out by the sound of his own nervous heartbeat.

After what seemed like an eternity, he finally reached the General, seeing the grin on the hound's face. Pepper looked at each team member, nodding in turn to each of them. He finally decided to cut to the chase. "Star Fox, we are in your debt. I would be honored to have you as part of the Cornerian-" Fox knew what he was going to say and cut him off before he had the chance to finish "Oh no sir, we prefer doing things our own way" He knew the rest of the squadron had nodded in agreement behind him. He heard his communicator start beeping, a message was coming in. he ended the annoying blare by answering it, touching the small holographic button lightly watching as a much newer looking ROB materialized in front of him, a small hologram of the robot looking at him and giving his message. "Great Fox is ready to go" He droned on in his mechanical monotone. Fox nodded as the hologram disintegrated, turning back to Pepper. "It's time for us to go now." Pepper nodded solemnly as the team turned on their heels and left the room, quickly returning to the Great Fox to receive the notification that the funds they were to receive had been transferred to their account. Satisfied, the team retreated inside the dreadnaught, the Great Fox slowly lifting into the sky and disappearing.

The memory ended and Fox looked around. He spotted a clock and was shocked to realize he had been daydreaming for over an hour. He frowned and stood, stretching. The vulpine looked back toward the kitchen and noticed nobody was there. He reached into his pocket, latching onto his communicator and pulling it out. Fox quickly typed in a message to Peppy, Slippy, and Falco to return to the home. He knew that Peppy had planned to go back to the Cornerian Flight Academy to try and train a few recruits, a position that General Pepper had offered him while the team was planet-side. Fox didn't need to wait long, as he began to hear a purr in the distance, quickly growing louder as Falco's bike returned to the driveway. He revved the engine a few times, as if he was doing it just to get on Fox's nerves.

The avian chuckled to himself as he turned off the engine, strolling into the house and feeling the cool air hit his face. It was hot outside today, yet Falco still wore the thick leather that he had worn every day he went out on the jet black Harley. Fox didn't understand how he could do it in this sweltering heat. Falco came in and sat down, leaning back into the soft khaki colored couch. Sooner or later, the two heard Peppy's car park in the driveway. Peppy had dropped by where Slippy was in the engineering department of the academy, offering him a ride back as they got the message.

Then the team waited for their newest member, Krystal. As soon as the front door shut behind Slippy and Peppy, the vixen slowly made her way down the stairs, pulling at the clothes she was wearing. The cerulean fox had put on a pink shirt and white pants. Both were tight, but not tight enough to be uncomfortable, at least not on a person that was used to wearing this type of clothes. She was more accustomed to wearing the clothes native to the people of Cerinia, her home planet. She didn't enjoy wearing these, but decided he might as well if she was ever going to get used to them.

Finally, as the team turned it's attention to Fox, he began explaining why he had called them all back to the house. "Listen, you guys remember what Pepper asked us at the end of the Lylat Wars, right? About joining the Cornerian Army?" The veteran members of the team nodded, knowing what he was going to say already. Fox paused for a moment, looking at them, then continued. "I've been thinking, and maybe we should take that offer. Before the Saurian crisis, I didn't think we would ever get another job, I thought the Great Fox was eventually going to just shut down from disrepair. That was too close. We were running low on almost everything essential to staying alive, and I don't want to take another chance like that." He said, looking at Slippy and Peppy, who had stayed on the ship throughout the mission. The two nodded as they remembered how close they had come to losing quite a bit with their little gamble. Fox went on "I don't know when we'll get more work, and if we fuze with the military, we'll get a salary. Maybe not as much as we like, but enough to where we don't have to worry about where our next meal is coming from. The Great Fox can be paid off, because I don't know when we can get the loan paid off that my father took out to get it. We can even get her repaired and refitted with some more weapons, maybe an upgrade or two. I don't particularly like this idea, but it's going to become my only option sooner or later. That's why I called you all back here, to ask your decisions on the matter."

Fox looked around, his gaze passing over each member's face as he finally stopped on Falco, noticing the avian staring intently. Falco

opened his beak, about to speak, so Fox stopped and looked at his wing mate. The bird started off much different than Fox had thought. He had expected a cocky remark or a comment on how it was a stupid idea, but he got something else entirely. "Fox, I know you don't like the idea, and I don't think any of us do, but no matter what you decide, we're a team, and you're our leader. It's your decision to make, so whatever you take, we're gonna follow you through with it." The avian stared at Fox, who was in a state of mild shock at what Falco had just said. The former gang member smiled and sat back into the couch. Apparently, none of the other team members had expected it.

Fox slowly came to his senses and nodded at the avian, "I'll go to the base in Corneria City and speak to him about it." He stated, standing and walking to the door. The vulpine wrapped his hand around the doorknob, pulled, and stepped out into the bright sunlight, knowing his day's as a mercenary were coming to an end today, and his days as a soldier in the Cornerian Army were going to begin very soon.

**I think I did pretty well on this chapter. If you liked it, review it and tell me what I can improve on, I welcome any criticism, but if you guys keep reviewing, I'll keep writing it, and even if people stop reading, I'm still gonna put it up anyway. I'll start work on the next chapter tomorrow at the earliest. Hope you enjoyed the second chapter of Star fox: Alpha and Omega **

3. Promotions and Upgrades for everyone

**Okay, time to start this next chapter. Writing the beginning while listening to a harbinger remix of "baby" called "Surrender Shepard"...see? Even the worst crap can be made cool if a giant sentient battleship is singing it. If anybody wants a link to the song I'll put it in my end **

note at the bottom. On to the story!

Fox sighed softly as he pulled the lever up on the steering wheel neck to put the car in park. He leaned against the steering wheel, thinking a bit before he went into the base. He knew that this was contrary to what he had wanted. If he went through with this, he knew that his squadron would be held contempt to military rules and regulations, no longer able to employ the tactics and strategies that made them so successful.

The vulpine sat there for quite a while, losing track of time while he thought when he heard a soft tap on the window of his car. He looked over, seeing a white gloved hand. He followed the hand back to the arm it was attached to, and then worked his way up to see the black visor of an officer's hat, encircled by red. The hat was nudged up so Fox could see who it was. When the hat moved, it revealed the concerned face of General Pepper.

Fox's breath hitched in his throat as he opened the door, stepping out and saluting the old hound. His salute was returned, but with an air of hesitation. The General reached over and pulled Fox's paw down, puzzled. "Fox, you don't have to salute me, you're not part of the Cornerian Army, you and I both know that." He stared at the vulpine for a few moments, then took a deep breath. "Fox, is

something wrong?" The hound could tell Fox was stressed about something, but didn't know what. "Fox, walk with me, I know you have something to say, so let's get it cleared up" He put a hand on the squadron commander's shoulder, leading him along.

Fox didn't know what to think of the General's actions as he spoke up. "I'm sorry General, it's just that...I need to talk to you about something. Before you called that job in to us, I thought the Gret Fox was going to shut down entirely, that we would have no food, that our Arwings would cease to function. Our jobs since the war have been too far between to keep us going at peak efficiency. Our mercenary lifestyle won't be able to stay afloat much longer, which is why I'm asking if your offer to fuze with the army is still on the table" The General looked over at Fox. "Yes, of course it is. I knew that from what Slippy had told me while you were on Sauria. He confessed that he was worried, and thanked me for sending you on the job. I never knew jobs were that uncommon for the team."

Fox nodded, letting his pride drop out of him as he swallowed and continued on with his question. "Can...Can I take you up on the offer General?" Fox was hoping that the officer would allow it, and his hopes were granted as the hound smiled and nodded. "Is that what was troubling you? Why didn't you just say so, Fox?" Fox's ears flattened against his head as he began to explain. "I didn't want to be hindered by the rules and regulations that the military uses. Rules would keep us from running our best, and I didn't want to take away the team's freedom." The General continued to smile. "If you really want to continue like this, then you can, you'll be placed in the special forces wing." Fox perked up. "Thank you so much General!" Fox was shocked that the General was so lenient on the matter.

Fox suddenly began to slow down, his ears flattening against his head again. "Can I ask you one more thing?" Pepper nodded, urging him to continue. "Can I get Krystal into a class at the flight academy?" Pepper began to laugh softly. "Of course you can, just as long as she isn't a daydreamer, like you were when we first crossed paths" Fox's eyes darted down and his ears fell further as he began to remember his first day at the academy.

The flashback proceeded as if time had stopped, Fox was back in his body, sitting in his desk at the academy. He had picked a seat near one of the windows, looking out he could see the green foliage and the sapphire sky above. It was perfect for a first day at school, if it could be called that. A dog was sitting next to Fox, and a toad in front of him. Fox quickly recognized them. Slippy turned around and stared at the dog, flashing a grin and shaking nervously. It had taken quite a bit of work to get into the academy, even for Fox. The dog returned the grin and looked over at Fox. "Well, buddy, I see you made it in here too, huh?" Fox recognized the voice as one that belonged to Bill Gray, a friend he had known since kindergarten, along with Slippy.

Fox chortled at the question. "I should be asking you that, Bill" Fox had scored considerably well on the entrance exam, Bill fell in behind him, and Slippy placed in the top five. Slippy quickly quieted the two as the door to the classroom opened. The rest of the class fell silent as a hound in a freshly pressed officer uniform slowly walked into the room, stepping slowly and putting his weight into the steps, making it clear that even though his head and eyes were straight, he was already observing them like a vulture eying a new

meal.

The officer had a double bar insignia, indicating he was a Captain, quite high for that of an instructor, which was usually reserved for a 2nd Lieutenant. The Captain stopped at the board and gingerly set a book on his desk, removing his hat seconds later to reveal the floppy ears that were common among the Cornerian populace. Most of the planet consisted of canines. He moved his eyes over the class and reached for a clipboard on the desk. He looked down it silently, then turned back to the class. "I am going to call roll. When I say your name, you will answer with 'Here, Sir', am I understood?" The class nodded in unison. The officer waited another moment as he continued to watch them, then turned his eyes down to the clipboard. Every name he called was responded to with the answer he was looking for. He continued to the bottom of the list, calling the last three names and looking at them. "McCloud, Toad, Gray. Is that everyone? Good. I am your instructor, Captain Pepper. You are in this academy to learn the rules of being a pilot and soldier in the Cornerian Army. It is my duty to make sure you know those rules. You will know how to recite them in your sleep by the end of the year." Fox didn't know it yet, and neither did anyone else in the room, but the instructor they would learn to loathe would one day become commanding officer of the Cornerian Army.

He began instructing the cadets, but Fox's mind began to wonder as he grew bored, noticing the way the room smelled of ammonia, it had been cleaned recently, the steel chairs and desks reflected the light well. He faintly heard someone calling his name. Bill grabbed his shoulder and shook him lightly, waking him from his daze. He looked at his friend, who in turn pointed toward the instructor, who was waiting patiently. "Mr McCloud, are you listening, or are you just daydreaming?" Fox was trying to think of an answer, stuttering out "No sir, I was listening" Pepper frowned and looked intently at the vulpine. "Then tell me, what was the answer to the last question I asked?" Fox mentally cursed. He was playing the question trick, just like teachers in grade school had done. "I don't know." He finally answered, sinking into his chair. Pepper pointed his ruler at fox, the light glinting off the metal like a sword. "If you continue to daydream and lose focus, I will fail you in this class, and you will not receive your pilot's license, am I understood?" Fox nodded. He had to pull it together.

The scenery around Fox began to dissolve, returning to the small confines of corridors characteristic of a Cornerian military base. He was back in the present, still processing the data that Pepper had just let seep into his brain. Fox sighed and turned to his old instructor. "Thank you, for letting me do this." Fox stopped as he noticed the General was holding a small box. "Fox, take this, do not open it until you return to your team. The names inside are under the proper insignia. Good luck with your decision...Lieutenant Colonel McCloud." Fox was puzzled, but didn't have time to think as Pepper snapped off a crisp salute. Fox returned it with an air of calmness surrounding him. He spun on his heel and exited the base, returning to his car.

The vulpine's mind was a jumble of thoughts as he drove the 20 mile distance home. As he arrived at the home occupied by his team, he slowly trudged up the stairs, still confused on what Pepper meant as he slid his key into the locks and opened the door. The Star Fox team was still where he had left them, and turned when the door opened. He

quickly strode to where he had been sitting earlier and looked at the box in his hand, Falco breaking the silence. "What's in the box, Fox?" The avian began to chuckle as he noticed he had made a rhyme. Fox continued to stare at the small wooden box in his hand. "I don't know, but we're about to find out" He announce, opening the box and almost getting blinded as a light reflected off of the items within. Four rank insignia were inside, sitting snug inside indents in the purple velvet holding them all in place. Under each insignia, was a rank followed by each last name. Fox had been sent straight to Lieutenant Colonel, just as Pepper had said that sent Fox into a jumble of confusion. He was now officially the rank of typical squadron commander in the Cornerian Air Force. Slippy had been promoted up to the rank of Captain, two silver double bars hovering just above his name. Falco was given the position of Major, a golden oak leaf sitting there in the box, one for each shoulder, and Krystal had been given a commission straight t 2nd Lieutenant. Fox handed out the ranks to the rest of the team and gazed at his own silver oak leaves.

Falco stood and walked to his room without a word, Slippy doing the same. Only Fox and Krystal remained. She admired the new insignia she had, twirling it about in her paws. Fox felt very at ease watching her. The vixen looked up at Fox and smiled. He returned the smile, absentmindedly twirling the insignia in his paw, forgetting he was doing it after a while.

Krystal bit her lip as she thought, wanting to start a conversation, but visibly nervous. Fox caught onto this and started it up for her. "So, Krystal, how have you been since you joined the team?" The vixen sighed in relief, but Fox didn't notice it. He was too intent on how beautiful she was to mind her sigh. He was beginning to blush through his fur as he thought more and more. Krystal giggled as she noticed it. "Um, Fox? I should probably tell you I'm a telepath" she said, stifling more giggles as Fox turned even redder. Krystal knew this was having quite a bit of an effect on the vulpine. "Don't be shy Fox, it's alright. I'm not going to probe your mind without your consent" She said, finally breaking out into a fit of laughter.

Fox's ears flattened out against his head for what seemed like the millionth time today. "Krystal, whe I went to talk to General Pepper today, to get the team into the military, I asked if he could get you into the Cornerian Flight Academy, it's where I went to learn to fly, and I thought maybe you should go there too. The General said he would instruct you further if you would like, with the rest of the team to observe and help in certain situations. He taught me, and helped me become the pilot I am today. I know that under his guidance, you'll become a great pilot, so what do you think about it?"

Now it was Krystal's turn to blush, the red tint seeping through her blue fur. "I don't know Fox, what if I'm not good enough?" The vulpine smiled at her, his blush leaving him. "I'm positive that you'll become one of the best pilots I know, you'll be learning from the best, and the person who taught the best. I promise you'll get the hang of it quickly." Krystal's face cleared as she smiled wider at her commander. "Thank you, Fox, for the motivation and the chance to become a part of the team." The newly commissioned Lieutenant Colonel flashed his trademark grin, one of his canines showing through and glinting at her. "Don't thank me, thank General Pepper."

Krystal nodded. "I will. When do we start?" Fox thought about what Pepper had said earlier. "We start training you in three days, beginning at eight in the morning, and continuing on until three in the afternoon. Same hours he taught Slippy and myself under."

Krystal thought for a moment, taking it all in, and beamed at Fox, running over and hugging him. "Thank you, Fox, for the opportunity, and that sounds great." Fox was back to blushing, very severely this time. "I-it's nothing, I just wanted to try and help you in replacing Peppy, and I thought you might enjoy it" He said, barely managing to get through the last words as Krystal unwrapped her arms from around the orange vulpine's neck.

It was getting late now, and the sun was beginning to set. The Star Fox team was no longer a mercenary unit, but it had transformed into a special operations wing in the Cornerian military. One conversation had changed the role of a team that had saved the entire Lylat System. Krystal was already up the stairs and into her bedroom before Fox came to his senses. He sat back and relaxed, thinking about how the day had progressed. It was all coming into view now. Despite the reluctance he had while making the decision, he could tell it was going to start paying off very soon.

The Colonel stood, stretching and popping a few joints, he traveled up the stairs and stopped at Falco's door, knocking softly and grasping the door handle as he heard his falcon team mate say the door was open. He opened the white wooden door, spotting Falco sitting on his bed and staring at the golden leaves he had gotten earlier. The avian looked up to his commander, a small grin appearing on his face. "So, what did Pepper say earlier? About how we're getting set up?" Falco already knew the answer, knowing the old hound was quite lenient to the team. Fox smiled softly at his wing man. "It's almost like we never joined. I mean, sure we have to wear the uniforms and go with military regulations, but out there on the battlefield, we take orders from no one. He said we could stay in our own squadron, not bogged down by orders from higher brass." Falco grinned and stood up, walking past Fox into the hallway. "Let's tell Slippy, I'm sure he wouldn't mind either way, but might as well let him in on it now"

Fox nodded, repeating the procedure he had done with Falco and entering Slippy's room with the Falcon. Slippy took it all in pretty calmly, but had one question to ask. "Wait...what about the Great Fox?" Fox grinned at the toad, letting his answer out. "Pepper paid off the loan that my father took out to get her built. She's all ours now, and she's going under renovations and upgrades tomorrow. While we train Krystal in the cockpit, I want you to supervise the upgrades and the new design, clear?"

The little green toad was ecstatic. "Fox, I'm starting to think that this was a great idea. We get to keep everything we had as a mercenary squadron, and we get so much more. No worrying about where our next meal is coming from, no worrying about what our next job will be, now it's all set up in order, and our ship is going to be better than ever. If they upgrade the Great Fox, I'm doing some upgrading of my own to the Arwings and the Landmasters." Fox nodded at his mechanic. "I wouldn't have it any other way Slip, you start work on them tomorrow morning, so be at the base early, Peppy will be there to meet you, so get some rest, both of you." He said, smiling at Slippy and turning around. "Go on Falco, to bed with you too" The

avian groaned and mumbled under his breath about meeting someone, but Fox didn't care, he was tired, so it didn't matter what Falco did, Fox planned to get a good night's sleep tonight, and that was final.

The vulpine crawled into bed, laying on his back and looking up at the ceiling. He spent a while thinking about how the day had gone. It wasn't long before his eyelids grew heavy and he finally fell asleep.

****That's another chapter ticked off in this story. I wrote earlier that I would put a link in if anybody wanted to hear that song, so here it is:****

****[.com/watch?v=Vx0-K4A6jrw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vx0-K4A6jrw)****

**** So, review and tell me what you guy's thought about this chapter. I tried to include a bit more talking, and I integrated them into the Cornerian military. I also thought the idea was pretty good on hos Pepper and Fox met, and how the Great Fox is upgraded. Who agrees that Slippy is better off in R&D? Anyway, I hope you guys enjoyed this. If you did, I'll keep writing, if you didn't, I'll still continue! May begin work on next chapter tomorrow, since I have nothing else to do.****

4. Fox's cooking brings back memories

****Okay, starting this chapter up almost two or three hours after my last upload, and I figure I should get as much writing in now as I can, due to the fact that my little troll (she knows who she is) might get lonely, so I'm gonna write while I wait for her to respond to some things. The link at the end of the last chapter didn't go through, so just look for "DJ Harbieber" on youtube. It's not easy to miss. Now, on to the chapter****

Fox couldn't see Krystal or Falco, he had lost them both in the sun. The vulpine turned as he saw a silhouette, bringing his Arwing into a tight bank. He immediately found Falco, bringing his weapons to bear on the 'enemy' ship, he hit it twice, just enough to bring it's shields down and force Falco to land or risk getting hit again and being shot down.

Fox hit the comm link button. "General, Falco is out of commission, Krystal is somewhere, I lost her in the sun and haven't seen her in a few minutes. Do you have a vis-" His entire ship rocked and an alarm blared loudly in his ears as he spotted his shield bar drop from the green into the red. "Dammit!" He looked around as he tried to find where the laser fire had come from, his answer came into view seconds later. Another Arwing was floating lazily around his own, Krystal's giggling face seen inside the polarized cockpit.

Fox jabbed the comm link button, sending a communique to Krystal. "Your getting good Krystal, hell, you've been up in the air only three times and you already fly like you've been practicing for years!" Krystal winked at him from the screen holding her face in the communications window. "Like I said Fox, I'm a telepath. I can adapt to almost any situation much faster than a normal person. How do you think I learned your language so quickly? The entire time I was trapped in that crystal, I was conscious, and I could sift through

your mind, and I knew what you were thinking the entire time. By the way, thank you for all the compliments, Fox"

Fox began to blush through his fur again. The vixen was talking about how he had said how she was so beautiful when he saw her every time he visited Krazoa Palace. Fox slowly brought his Arwing into a landing next to Falco's as Krystal's Arwing roared overhead, General Pepper in hot pursuit of her. Fox unstrapped himself from the seat, opening the canopy and hopping out to see where she had hit him. As soon as he found the location, his jaw hit the ground and his eyes widened to the size of golf balls. There, hidden in the area where the engine wash would turn the whiteness of the Arwing into a charred carbon scorched substance, he saw his shield generator had been hit. Fox didn't know it yet, but Falco had walked over to see what was wrong. He, too, had the same reaction before he came to his senses. "I'm on Krystal's team from now on!" He claimed, making Fox come back to the world from his shock. "No, I am!"

This would go back and forth until Krystal and Pepper landed, Krystal beginning to let her giggles show through and melt Fox from within. The Falcon saw Fox go limp at her giggle and smirked. Krystal didn't know why Fox was limp, but Falco knew exactly why. "I win this time Foxy, next time I'll try to go easy on you" Fox heard him, but didn't care anymore. He finally managed to get up and looked at Krystal and the General. "So, who won?" Pepper didn't say anything, a blank look on his face as Krystal's giggles grew into a laugh. Fox's ears flattened against his head, something they had started to do quite often. He could already tell that she had won.

"Krystal, you're getting pretty good at piloting. You hit my shield generator dead on. You're gonna be ready to get your pilot's license soon and you just started!" Krystal blushed a bit through her fur, smiling at him. "Is that so Fox? I haven't went one on one with you yet." She said, a hint of amusement in her voice. The vulpine caught onto this and smiled softly at the Cerinian vixen. "Tomorrow, after Slippy gets my generator fixed, then we'll see if your really as good as we think you are"

Krystal winked at him, causing Fox to melt yet again. Pepper and Falco only watched from a small distance, amused. Fox and Krystal were standing a few feet from each other, Fox was rubbing the back of his neck nervously, Krystal was giggling constantly, finding his nervous behavior to be comical.

Finally, Pepper looked at the watch in his own ship. It looked like a grayer form of the Arwing, but it's G-diffusers were different, and it's laser cannons were bigger. "Fox, our session is over for the day. You may all return home now. The team nodded and saluted the General returning to their own ships and igniting the engines and lifting off of the ground, making their way back to the city that housed the Star Fox team's home.

The trip took only a few minutes at the high speeds capable of the Arwings. As soon as they had landed, Falco went from his Arwing straight to his Harley. "I'll be back later" was all he said before making the engine roar and sending the powerful black bike out onto the street and down the road, turning a corner a hundred yards away and disappearing, the roar of the big bike's engine slowly fading as Krystal and Fox were left alone together.

It was already 3:30, Fox led the vixen into the house, moving straight to the kitchen, Krystal hot on his heels. Her orange counterpart turned to her and explained the situation. "So, Slippy is out at the engineering base, working on the Great Fox, Peppy is an instructor at the academy, and he moved into the instructor quarters, and Falco is off to see who knows what...so, would you like something to eat?" Krystal smiled softly at the vulpine. "I still haven't tried a lot of Cornerian food, it's only been two days since we got here, and the week before that was spent eating pizza and various food that was on the Great Fox. Why don't you decide, Fox?"

He returned the smile. "Consider it done. I'll be finished in half an hour" Krystal nodded and left the room, going to watch tv in the next room over. Fox quickly got to work, reaching into the refrigerator and grabbing a steak for himself, and a fish for Krystal. He knew she would probably like it, and it would allow her to eat something from Corneria that she had already tried elsewhere. It would simplify her moving from whatever food she ate on Cerinia to Corneria. The vulpine prepared the steak and set it in the oven, making a few salads as he plopped the fish onto a burner, pulling out a bit of lemon juice and pouring a small bit onto the burner plate, letting it soak into the fish and then sprinkling a bit of spices on it, knowing it would provide some added flavor. Then he flipped it and repeated the process.

Fox could smell the steak in the oven, and although he didn't like fish that much, it was making his mouth water. The smell of the lemon doused fish drifted into the next room and Krystal absentmindedly licked her lips. Eventually, she heard the timer that meant the food was done and slowly got up, turning the tv off and going to the table, looking over just in time to see Fox come out, 2 plates balanced in his hands.

He set her plate in front of her, and her mouth began to water even more as she noticed the fish. Fox didn't know it, but he had picked her favorite type of food. The fish was originally pale white, but now, it was a smoky tan color from where it had been cooked and where the lemon juice had soaked in, little black specks from the spice showing up everywhere. Krystal looked over at the salad on the side of her plate as well. Fox had made the meal almost perfectly. She saw his plate out of the corner of his eye. A thick, black steak sat on the white dish, Fox had cut a small piece off of the end to watch for when it was finished. It was black on the surface, a light brown going through for a few centimeters, and then finally a large red spot in the center of it.

"Well, dig in" Fox said, picking up his fork and knife. Krystal did likewise, cutting into the fish. As soon as she had cut a piece off, the smell of lemons and meat filled her nose. If he makes it smell this good the taste can only be better, She thought, finally taking a bite. As she bit down, the tender fish almost melted in her mouth, driving her crazy with the taste. She swallowed the bite and looked at Fox. "Fox where did you learn to cook so well? This fish is delicious!" She exclaimed, waiting for his secret.

Fox put his eating utensils down and looked across the table to her, smiling softly. "I learned from my mother, when I was very little. She taught me to cook when I was eight years old. My father was almost always away on missions, so mom brought me up almost on her own. We lived on a base for most of my early life, then when dad

finished a mission that paid well enough, he bought this house. While he was away, mom would always teach me how to do things, like cooking. Then, Andross tried to kill my father, by planting a bomb on his car. Andross didn't think that would be the day that mom took the car out for shopping..." Fox stopped, his eyes closing as he remembered the day it happened. He had been waiting for his mother to come home, his father had been out with Peppy that day. Then, later, Fox's father James, and Peppy came to the house, both with sad looks on their faces.

James picked up his son, staring at the small fox through his aviators. "Dad? Where's mom?" Fox asked, clinging to his father. "Fox, your mother was in...an accident..." James said. Fox could very clearly make out the hurt and pain in James' voice. The pup reached over and removed the older fox's aviators, seeing tears in his eyes and knowing exactly what had happened as tears began to form in his own eyes.

The image disappeared suddenly. Fox looked around and saw Krystal next to him, hugging him and asking if he was okay. Fox's fur felt wet, and he realized he was actually crying as he returned the hug Krystal was giving him. Fox wiped away the tears and gave Krystal an answer. "Yes, I'm okay, just a memory...That's all" He responded, smiling to let her know he was indeed okay. "Are you sure?" the vixen asked as Fox nodded again.

Krystal returned to her food and finished it, Fox doing likewise. The vulpine took the dishes back to the kitchen, beginning to wash them as Krystal hugged him once more from behind. "Thank you for the meal, Fox. I'm going to go to bed now, I'll see you tomorrow." Fox turned around and smiled at the vixen. "Your welcome Krystal" She smiled back at him and made her way back to the stairs, leaving Fox to wash the dishes as he slowly fell back into the memory he had earlier, thinking about his mother.

****Yeah, this chapter feels kind of short, but I wanted to get a little bit more of Fox and Krystal into this, or at least try. I couldn't really think all that well. So, here's another chapter, I hope you guys enjoy this, I might not update it tomorrow, I won't be home for quite some time. It's summer, and I usually wouldn't have much to do, but I have practice and book detail tomorrow, so I'll start writing as soon as I can, and I slept in till 5 today FML. Anyway, I'll update maybe the day after tomorrow. By the way, if you want to contact me on anything, go to my homepage (listed on my profile) and send me a message. Have fun reading!****

5. The patrol and the rose

****Okay, after a few days of book detail, I'm finally freed up to start on my next chapter. The bridge to the aparoid war era is coming ever closer, and that means the feelings between Fox and Krystal are slowly becoming stronger. Who can't wait for it? Anyway, on to the chapter!...and no, I'm not going to add bill in for quite a while, if at all, maybe during the aparoid war era, also bringing in an OC, and at one point in the story, at some time, maybe even this chapter, I'm going to use the Star Fox font I downloaded. If anyone wants a link to it, PM me, and sorry for the long delay.****

Fox was striding through the main corridor to the center of the

Raebyrne Air Force Base. It had been built 30 years prior. The base was home to the 307th Special Forces Wing, The wings of Ragnarok was a nickname they had been given, as next to Star Fox, they were the best squadron the Cornerian military had. Fox had already met their commander, who held control of the base and was the wing's commanding officer.

Omega Colonel Damon 'Big Boss' Ballard was a fox, originally from Cerinia, just as Krystal was, but his fur had been blackened from many battles and the stress of carrying the baton of command for so many years. However, Krystal had yet to meet the Colonel. Damon had spoken with Fox earlier, and now the vulpine looked back on it.

Fox's mind flashed white as he fell into yet another flashback, something he had been having quite frequently for about a month now. The vulpine's emerald eyes shifted to the left, catching sight of the Big Boss in his peripheral vision, striding toward him. "Colonel" The cerinian had called out "I need to speak to you about a few things before we start talking about command. I like to know all of my men, to get their strength's and weaknesses into perspective. Now I know that your one of the best pilots in the Lylat system, maybe even THE best, but I know you have weaknesses, and I want to know what they are, to better understand you." Fox's thoughts ran through his mind quickly, already processing information about the other officer. Hmm...he's blunt, but he seems caring just as well. Fox thought as Damon came closer.

Fox nodded. "Of course. My only weakness is that my efficiency goes down if I have to work with more than four people. It's why General Pepper let me keep my squadron the way it is." Damon nodded, taking it in. "And what of the rest of your squadron? Are they the same?" Fox nodded at the senior officer, indicating he hadn't any further weaknesses to discuss. The Colonel mumbled to himself, as if discussing it with apparitions Fox couldn't see.

Eventually, the large black vulpine nodded once more, satisfied with what he had learned, and turned back to Fox. "Excellent, if I need you, I'll contact you, until then, carry on with your tasks." The Colonel vanished almost as quickly as he had appeared, leaving Fox to his duties.

The brown vulpine's emerald eyes followed his jet black counterpart, his ear twitching a bit in curiosity. He had read the Colonel's dossier, and it had said he was unpredictable. That was an understatement.

Fox sighed and continued on towards the hangar bay assigned to the squadron, now that it had finally settled into the military. Inside, Fox saw the silhouette of the team's Arwings, noticing a glint in the shadows. The glint had come from a small figure next to the Arwing usually reserved for Falco, and sure enough, the avian came out of the shadows and flashed his trademark cocky grin at his squadron commander.

"Finally decide to show up, Foxie?" He said, a chuckle escaping onto his words. Fox rolled his eyes and smiled a bit. "Yeah, figured I'd stop off and have breakfast first" Fox was messing with Flco, but apparently, the falcon didn't know that. "What? You stopped for breakfast without even telling me? Thanks, Fox, I totally wouldn't

have enjoyed food before we took to the skies." Fox sighed, his ears drooping. "Falco, I was kidding, okay? I didn't eat anything this morning." Falco was quiet for a few moments, before he uttered out "oh...I knew that" Fox rolled his eyes yet again at his wingmate.

"Yeah, whatever, lets just get into the sky so we can get this over with. I love flying, but today isn't exactly a day that I would prefer to fly." Falco's beak suddenly turned upwards into a sly grin. "Oh really now? Why not?" Fox remained silent, not letting the bird know. "Falco's eyes narrowed inside the bands of red feathers that struck through the blue feathers covering most of his body. "Dinner with Krystal again?" Falco suddenly began hugging the air, taking on a higher pitched voice. "Oh Fox, it's alright, don't worry" Falco went on, continuing to mock his superior.

Fox knew he was imitating Krystal from the dinner a few nights before, but he didn't know how he knew about it. "Okay, how did you find out?" He asked, crossing his arms and giving the ace a questioning glare. Falco ceased his mockathon and smirked at the vulpine. "You know that I can always hack the security cameras in the house to look at anything that happens, just in case something interesting pops up when I'm not there."

Fox growled softly, closing his eyes and letting his ears flatten out as he blushed softly through his fur. "Damn Slippy for teaching you that". Falco continued to smirk and hopped into his interceptor. "Okay, come on Fox, even I know when enough joking around is enough, so lets get this over with" Falco closed the canopy on the Arwing and gave Fox a thumbs up.

Fox shrugged and did likewise to his own Arwing, flashing the gesture back at Falco as both ships slowly began to roll out of the hangar bay and onto the tarmac. Slippy had recently installed landing gear similar to that of planes from before Corneria had invented hover capability in ships. Fox didn't really mind it, as he still had the ability to hover, but he liked the feel of the fighter rolling out onto the runway, feeling every little bump and crack in the asphalt.

He and Falco both lined up, Falco's ship was lined up with his ship's nose right beside Fox's left wing. He could hear Fox key the communications channel. "Falco, are you good? Make sure your G-diffuser isn't messing up again" Fox said, a smirk appearing on the video screen that opened up anytime communication was established with another fighter. He was picking on Falco again about the Lylat Wars, when he had been tailed by three interceptor II class fighters, claiming there was something wrong with the G-diffuser.

Now it was Falco's turn to roll his eyes. "Yeah hotshot, I'm good to go, so let's get rolling." Fox nodded and turned his communication priority onto the air traffic controller. "Air tower 276, Colonel McCloud and Major Lombardi, requesting permission to take off, over" The tower quickly responded with instructions. "You got it Galm flight, cleared for runway 23, rock those babies onto the tarmac and hit the skies." Fox turned to look at Falco, flashing the thumbs up and keying another communications channel. "Green light blue boy, let's go."

Fox ignited his engine's afterburners, hearing and feeling the roar

from the engines shaking the craft, seconds later, he heard Falco's do likewise. The Arwing's quickly accelerated down the runway, picking up speed and reaching the end of the runway within seconds. Fox and Falco pulled up and the noses of their crafts left the ground, pulling into the blue skies.

"Falco, check the G-diffuser system output." Within a few moments of tinkering with his gauges, Falco gave response. "All clear, I'm in gear" Fox nodded, sighing softly. "Got it, now, just another day of boring patrol." Falco thought about it, sending a transmission to Fox after a while of thinking. "Fox, we don't exactly know if we're clear, or maybe some uninvited guests may drop by. I don't know, but be prepared."

Fox heard a tint of seriousness in his ace pilot's voice, knowing that he wasn't joking around. "Got it" Fox said. The two flew around for bit, not noticing anything out of the ordinary. Eventually, Fox saw a blip on his radar. "Hey Falco, you getting anything on radar?" Fox asked, watching as it came closer, two more appearing next to the original. "Yeah, but they don't match any allied ship signatures. What ship dimensions are you getting on scans?"

Fox's fingers glided over the controls in his ship, beeping quickly coming from behind him as the ship processed the data it was getting. "Three ships, registered as mercenary vessels...um, Falco?" The avian heard the subtle change in the Colonel's voice, already knowing exactly what he was going to say, finishing his thoughts for him. "Star Wolf." Fox was battling his decisions on whether to stand their ground if Wolf and his gang attacked, or run.

"Falco, we won't be able to go toe to toe with them for long. I know we're both good, but we aren't THAT good" Falco shushed his friend. "Hold on, I'm getting a comm channel. I'm gonna open it up, if it's any indication of the past, then you'll be getting one too." Fox nodded as he soon saw the screen flash and Wolf O' Donnell's face filled the screen.

"Long time no see, pup." The Star Wolf team's leader had changed quite a bit. His fur was buzzcut across his head, a white mohawk standing out in the sea of grey. He had replaced his black eyepatch with a blue cybernetic one, covering his eye, but not indicating that he was able to see using it.

Fox's fur bristled as he heard the voice, like gravel. "Wolf, what are you doing here?" The lupine smirked a bit. "We heard the Star Fox team got dissolved and joined the military. Is it true Fox?" The brown vulpine sighed, grudgingly nodding. Wolf's smirk faded. "We're not here to fight." Fox and Falco were quiet, not knowing what to say. "Then...why are you here?" the Major and Colonel asked in unison. Wolf's smirk quickly returned. "Because I came to see somebody."

Over in Falco's ship, the avian was quiet for once. He was thinking about why Wolf's wingmates were so quiet. Usually, Leon Powalski, a chameleon on the team, would be arguing with Falco, but then again, they hadn't seen each other in over eight years, he had barely seen his best friend in the last six or seven years, who knew anymore. Falco had lost track of the time since the fight he and Fox were in on Titania so long ago.

Falco quickly cleared his mind of the incident that had scarred their friendship, trying to get back to the matter at hand. Wolf must have told Leon to stay quiet, but now Falco was noticing something. He could only see three ships. The canopies on the wolfens were clear except for one ship, but he did see a small rose next to the cockpit. The avian wasn't paying attention, and his mind finally shifted back to the conversation between Fox and Wolf, hearing the lupine over the speakers in his ship. "There, now that I've explained myself, can we get clearance into a docking bay?" Fox thought about it, and noticing how Wolf finally wasn't threatening to shoot him down every five seconds, and was acting civilized, he nodded. "Yeah, Falco, guide on right, I'll take the left."

Falco quickly brought his ship around next to Leon's, seeing the chameleon smile in that odd, sadistic fashion that he loved. It sent shivers up Falco's spine. He saw Fox's radar signature hang onto the left of the five-ship formation. "Okay, bring 'em in". The formation accelerated back towards Corneria city, gliding over the sea that covered most of the planet, passing one of the intercontinental bridges that spanned Corneria. Each 'continent' was a small artificial island, separated by the large oceans as the cities were balanced on huge stilts that held the bottom of the platforms just above the waves.

A small amount of time passed and soon Falco saw the water disappear, replaced by the sight of bushes and grass. The formation circled around Raeburn Air Force Base, all of them listening in as Fox requested permission to land. "Air tower, this is Galm flight, we picked up a few extras, we need a place for them to land, over" The air tower came back through, the walrus in the control room directing them. "Land your ships on the civilian runway and they will be towed back to your hangars, the other ships will be kept there as well to lessen confusion, you cleared to land on CR-19, air tower over and out." The walrus disappeared and Fox marked a spot on their radars to show where they needed to go.

"Alright boys, low and slow. Falco lands first, then Star Wolf, then I'll bring up the rear, see you on the ground, Fox out". Fox took off his communicator and hovered there, watching each ship land, then finally putting down and hopping out. He saw Falco standing a small distance from Wolf and his team, the ship with the rose hadn't opened yet, the occupant still sitting inside. Wolf frowned and walked over, banging his fist on the hull. "Alright furball, enough playing around, hop out."

The canopy hissed open and a jet black panther emerged, not saying anything. Apparently, he wanted to keep his distance from everybody else, including the rest of Star Wolf. Wolf nodded to Fox. "Okay, we're ready, now can you take us inside, somebody is waiting on me." The lupine and vulpine walked together, a short distance from the other three. Wolf whispered softly, to where not even the panther's sensitive ears could hear it. "He's been acting strange for about a week now, we don't know why." Fox narrowed his eyes, thinking a bit, but his thoughts were suddenly shattered as he heard somebody yell from across the terminal.

"Wolf!"

**Ohhh! Cliffhanger! I'm sorry for the huge delay, I had writer's block. Then I got an idea from one of the reviewers, Jeremy Softpaus.

I was still stuck at the military base where he met the other commander when he sent the review in, so it got me pretty far. I'm gonna try making these longer. If anybody want's to know what happened during the fight Fox and Falco had, look for the manga "Farewell, Beloved Falco". Search for it on google and you'll find it pretty fast. I brought Panther in here, but since I don't really like him, I'll most likely make sure he's killed later, during the assault portion, because I decided I'm gonna just pull one of the command endings in, but...more about that later!. Anyway, once they start doing more assault era missions, I'll bring Fox and Krystal even closer, so for those that like what I'm doing with them now, you'll be rewarded soon enough! Until next time, send me ideas in PM's if you want, review on how I'm doing, and keep on reading!**

6. The skirmish over Fortuna

** Okay, I left you guys with a cliffhanger last chapter, who can guess who called wolf's name in the terminal? No guesses? Okay, I'll reveal it in this chapter, and despite the fact that it seems a bit...unexpected, I thought it would be fun to introduce along with this plot, and maybe later, if I get any reviews on it, I'll give a back story on Damon, a detailed one, rather than the short summary, so if you wanna learn a bit more about the Omega Colonel, review here, now, on to the story!**

"Wolf!"

The lupine turned in the direction of the voice, his ear quivering, trying to hear. The terminal didn't have many people in it besides the group and a few individual dog soldiers every now and then. He eventually turned and flinched at the sight, and the group around him began to snicker, trying to cover it with their paws, hands, or feathers.

A female husky was running towards them, a grin on her face as she quickly closed the distance, her heels hitting the hard floor and the sounds echoing through the empty terminal. Her fur was snow white, her crimson business dress showing up vividly, like blood on fresh snow. Her eyes were easily seen, brown orbs staring after the lupine hungrily, as if nothing would come between her and the Star Wolf team's leader.

Wolf sighed, or attempted to, as he let out an embarrassed growl. "Olivia, I told you not to meet me when I'm with anybody" The husky tilted her head a bit, frowning. "But...I missed you, I haven't seen you in ages" She said, whimpering softly and melting Wolf's tough exterior. He realized he had said something wrong and hugged her, eliciting a soft growl of victory to let Wolf know she had baited him and he fell for it. The others continued to smirk and snicker, turning to look outside at the planes still taking off, night quickly descending on the city like a shroud.

Olivia closed her eyes and wrapped her arms around the larger gray furred canine, nuzzling into his chest as he looked towards the others in case they turned and saw the scene. Eventually, he managed to pry her off of him, Olivia oblivious to the fact she was embarrassing Wolf. Fox and the others turned back to see they were finished making a scene. "Is this who you wanted to see, Wolf?" Fox said, smiling and joking around. Wolf growled at the vulpine "Shut

your trap, pup" Fox frowned slightly, the embers of his fun already extinguished. "Okay, okay, no need to get angry" Fox held up his hands in defeat.

"So, where are you guys going anyway?" Falco asked, Wolf turning to the avian "We have a house on Corneria, You didn't think we lived in our ships, did you? And besides, we don't all have ships to use as mobile houses like you guys" Fox shrugged "It occurred to me once or twice on the way here, but it didn't exactly cross my mind as the truth for you guys, so do you need a ride or anything?" Fox asked, Falco stiffening and turning to glare at Fox out of his peripheral vision. Wolf thought about it for a minute. "Kind of, you really would give us a ride?" Fox shrugged again. "Sure, I mean, why not? I'm not gonna leave you guys here all night"

Wolf let a hint of a smile creep onto his face. "Thanks Fox" His vulpine counterpart smirked. "No problem Wolf, come on, let's get out of here, it's already really dark outside." The group began making it's way to where Fox and Falco had parked their vehicles. Falco continued to ride his motorbike, stating he didn't want any other vehicle, he wanted to remember his days as part of the hot rodders, the gang he had led in his younger years. Fox, however, drove a medium sized sports car, a newer model. It was a banshee, made by the company that made every vehicle that team Star Fox used, with the exception of Falco's bike.

The group piled into Fox's car, all wondering how Falco could stand to ride the bike at night. It was the middle of November, and Corneria got very cold at night, even in the summer. Fox sighed and pulled out after the rapidly retreating roar of Falco's Harley. It wasn't long before the red lights disappeared, carrying the bird to who knows where, but Fox could hear Leon and Panther making jokes in the back of the car about Falco going to see Katt again.

Meanwhile, back at the Star Fox team residence, Krystal was sitting on the couch in front of the huge plasma screen tv, all the lights off, leaving the room to be covered in the soft light from the fireplace and it's battle with the plasma screen's harsh glow. The vixen had completed her training already, being remarked as one of the best the General had ever seen, next to Fox and James. This left her with too much free time, and she had also taken to watching horror movies when nobody else was around.

She was wrapped in the thick quilt, leaving only her head exposed from the top of her muzzle up. She had long forgotten about the bowl of popcorn on the table in front of her, for fear that if she left the confines of her blanket, monsters from the movie she was watching would grab her and take her away.

The vixen whimpered as she heard the dark menacing growl of the monster in the movie, sneaking up on the characters. It was killing them off one by one. Krystal thought of stopping the movie, but her curiosity and fear had her in a steel grip, leaving her to shiver and shake on the couch. The monster eventually stopped right in front of a door and reached one claw out and the screen went dark, shifting viewpoints to the characters inside, but at that very moment the door was opened by the monster, Fox had pulled into the driveway after dropping the Star Wolf team off at their house, and opened the door to their own residence.

Krystal turned to see the door open and shrieked, running to grab the nearest blunt weapon she could, which turned out to be the popcorn bowl, and began to assault the intruder with it. Little did the fear stricken vixen know it was her commander, who tried to stop her. "Ow! Krystal! It's me, Fox! Stop hitting me!"

Krystal didn't hear him, and continued until Fox grabbed her arms, halting the bowl's onslaught. The vulpine looked at her with a curious, albeit beaten look. "What was that all about!" Krystal's ears flattened against her head. "I was watching a scary movie, and I heard the door open and I thought you were a monster, coming to get me and take me away" She stated, sounding like little kid had been watching it, rather than a fully grown woman.

Fox's ear twitched and he sighed, going to get the remote to the tv and turning it off. "Why were you watching this in the dark?" He asked. Krystal shrugged, her tail flicking about every now and then innocently. Fox's ear twitched again and he went to get the vacuum, returning a few moments later to clean up the mess of popcorn Krystal had thrown about in her panic.

Krystal eventually turned the movie off, the fear it had instilled in her now gone, as she was no longer alone and the lights were on. Fox vacuumed the popcorn up quickly, and as soon as he finished, the phone began to ring. Krystal answered it before Fox could.

"Hello? You want to speak to Fox? Alright" Krystal pulled the phone from her ear, covering the receiver and turning to Fox. "It's General Pepper, he says it's important" Fox took the phone and listened to what the Commander had to say. "Fox, I know it's late, but I need you to prepare for tomorrow. I've found the location of a rebel fleet, it's made up of the remnants of the Venomian Army, led by Andrew Oikonny. He's trying to take off where Andross failed. I need the team prepped and ready by 0600 tomorrow morning. You will be a reserve force alongside Colonel Ballard's heavy interceptor wing. I'm holding both reserve forces back until it looks as if we may be caught in a long battle. Slippy has upgraded the Arwings, and the Great Fox is ready for flight. Peppy and Slippy will stay at dry dock for the night to get everything ready"

Fox was shocked at the news he was getting. "But General, Krystal hasn't even finished combat training yet!" The hound was ready for this. "I know that Fox, but I believe she's ready. All the same, it's your decision, and she gives the final say on what she does for this next battle." Fox bit his cheek, thinking about it, and finally ended the conversation. "Understood, we'll be ready"

Fox put the phone back on the base, turning to Krystal. "Krystal, General Pepper's mobilizing a battlegroup to destroy what's left of Andross's army, and he wants us as a reserve force in case anything goes wrong. We'll be kept back with Colonel Ballard's forces, but he will launch before we do, and if the fleet takes heavy losses, we will be mobilized. Slippy and Peppy are staying t dry dock to finish final preparations, and we leave at six tomorrow morning. Do you think you can take part in the battle if we get called in?"

Krystal's eyes widened slightly, but Fox caught it. The vixen thought for a moment, then opened her mouth, hesitating for a few seconds, then nodded. "I'll do it, it'll be like a final test, right?" She

said, a small smile growing on her face. Fox nodded, a smile of his own appearing. "Yeah, but it'll be very dangerous if we get caught up in the middle of a fleet sized skirmish. I've only been in one, and that was almost ten years ago." Krystal nodded "I'll take the risks, I should probably get as much danger as I can to maximize my skills." Fox nodded. "Yeah, that's a good idea. Anyway, you should probably head up to bed, I'll call Falco and tell him when to be there, and then I'm going to bed myself, goodnight Krystal" The vixen smiled softly at her brown counterpart. "Alright, goodnight Fox" She responded, making her way to the stairs and quickly going up to her room.

Fox stood there for a few moments, letting the information sink in. After he snapped out of the daze, he quickly made the call to Falco and then made his way up to his own room. He didn't fall asleep for quite some time, but when he did, it was like he had only closed his eyes for a moment before the alarm clock next to the bed began to blare out it's artificial wake up call.

Fox groaned and looked over. He had set the alarm for 5 AM, so he would have time to get ready. He grabbed some clothes, form fitting underarmor, and made his way to the bathroom, barging into Falco's room and flipping the avian's mattress over, jolting him awake with a squawk of protest. He did the same with Krystal's room, but instead of barging in and flipping her over, he knocked on the door. "Krystal? Are you awake? It's time to get up, we need to leave in an hour"

He heard her groan, not unlike he had a few minutes before. He didn't stick around long, quickly making his way to the bathroom and turning the shower on, changing the setting to hot. He didn't stay as long as he normally did, quickly cleaning his fur and getting out. Fox was moving quickly for such an early morning getting up. He continued to think about the battle as he brushed his teeth, spitting as he heard Falco knocking "Come on Fox, hurry up!" Fox rolled his eyes and opened the door, seeing both Falco and Krystal standing there.

Falco was about to go in when Krystal scampered inside, locking the door behind her. "Dammit Krystal!" The frustrated avian yelled. He sighed and went back to his room, waiting for the shower to turn off. It didn't take long for her to finish and get out, leaving the room open to Falco to finally get his own shower.

Fox had already placed the hardened cases and armor plates on his underarmor, slipping a flight vest over the space between his shoulder armor and his unprotected neck. Krystal, across the hall, had already made her way into the jumpsuit that Slippy had made for her, the armor on her shoulders a lot like Fox's but a little bit thinner, leaving most of the jumpsuit black except for the shoulder pads and the knee pads, along with the main portion of the jumpsuit. Her gloves and boots shared the same navy blue hue as her armor.

Falco also made his way back to his room after showering, sliding on his crimson jumpsuit and equipping the matching armor. The only thing on his armor that wasn't like a bloodstain were the silver boots and the blaster pistol he clipped to his leg, a black tool of death hidden in a silver holster.

Each member of the team nodded to each other as they exited their

rooms, quickly going downstairs and grabbing whatever they needed. After grabbing the foods they wanted for a breakfast on the way to the air base, they rushed outside and piled into Fox's car, setting off on their 20 mile trek to their Arwings.

As soon as they arrived on base, they ran towards the hangar bay, but before they were even halfway, the immediate area started to shake, and within seconds, the Great Fox had passed over them, coating the team in a shadow. The battleship had been completely refitted. The old plating that had paint peeling away were now much sleeker, the engines had been redesigned, their bulky tri-shape now turned into a row of three plasma based engines that let out heavy purple lances of fire, propelling the ship up into the atmosphere.

Falco was awestruck. "Slippy really didn't hold back..." He muttered, following the other two on towards the hangar. "So, I take it we're getting together in space then?" Fox nodded. "We're docking with the ship when we get into the stratosphere." Falco and Krystal said nothing, still following Fox to the Arwings.

The Wolfens that had landed with them the night before were still their, meaning that Star Wolf was still planet side. Fox payed no mind, quickly getting into his Arwing and firing up the engines. He felt the ground rumble as he heard two more roars, indicating Krystal and Falco were already a step ahead of him. He performed a communications check. "I'm ready, how about you two?" Krystal and Falco responded in unison. "All set Fox"

The vulpine taxied onto the runway, Falco and Krystal on his wing. Yet again, he asked for clearance to fly, receiving it almost immediately. He ignited the afterburners and began speeding across the runway, the other two Arwings close behind him. Within seconds of pushing the throttle to the max, the Arwings lifted into the sky, passing by the clouds and catching sight of the Great Fox, each of them making their way into the hangar entrance just above the engines, landing inside and navigating their way towards the bridge by foot.

Most of the hallways had stayed the same, but now instead of dimly lit hallways with stains every so often, they were a light tint of blue and much cleaner and tidier and the engines were much quieter as well, instead of a loud roar all the time, it was now just a constant hum, more calming than anything, but the team couldn't be calm at time like this, the adrenaline overcame any attempt at trying to slow down.

They soon entered the bridge, seeing ROB at an operations console, and Peppy turned in his chair to greet them. "Well hello! I see you've all made your way here relatively easily. Slippy has done a perfect job of redesigning the ship, don't you think?" The team nodded as another chair on the command deck spun around and revealed the giddy engineer. "Oh, and Fox, the Arwings we came here in will be overhauled when we get back. I already have four of the newly redesigned Arwings in the launch bay, ready if we get called in."

Fox nodded as Peppy piped in. "Fox? We have an incoming transmission from Colonel Ballard, putting him onscreen now." Fox turned towards the large screen at the front of the bridge, seeing the black vulpine appear. "Colonel McCloud, Be ready to launch your ships at anytime,

as my forces have already been called in. The fleet is taking heavy damage, I just entered the battle only moments ago and already I've lost two Satellite class Cruisers, the Beluga and the Militant. We're outnumbered two to one, and if I remember correctly, your good with horrible odds. We aren't doing we-

He was cut off as an adjutant handed him a situation report. "Scratch that, the General is calling you in now, so get in there before we lose this skirmish. Ballard out" The screen went dark, the words "Connection Terminated" scrolling across the screen. Fox turned to ROB. "Set course for Fortuna, and don't spare the horses" ROB turned back to the console and typed in a few commands, causing the ship to change course and make it's way to a giant pace station looming nearby.

Peppy opened a comm channel with the station. "This is the Great Fox, requesting permission for a gateway to Fortuna" The dog soldier on the other side of the transmission nodded and ordered somebody off screen to make the preparations. Within seconds, a large bright green light erupted from virtually nowhere. The ship made it's way closer and closer before being completely enveloped by the gateway, bringing the battleship onto the journey to the battlefield.

The bridge was filled with radio chatter from the fleet, even before getting there, getting transmissions from both single ships and capital ships, ROB quickly screened it all out, able to hear an admiral give orders to the fleet. "Remnants of Andross's butchers, you've kept us busy, but now your end is at hand" The team could see a few enemy ships get destroyed as Andrew's voice came through the speakers. "No quarter! Show these dogs we mean business!" The Cornerian fleet began to form up into a tight formation. "All ships: battle formation V! Break through the center!" The ships accelerated, quickly decimating the rebel fleet's front lines and breaking through as Andrew came over again. "Think you're tough eh? In that case, it's secret weapon time! Stealth squadron, open fire!" Several bulbous ships appeared out of nowhere and unleashed a barrage of missiles on the Cornerian fleet, destroying seven ships and heavily damaging many others.

The Cornerian Admiral growled at the enemy fleet, as if to scare it away. "Stinking ape! We underestimated the strength of his reserves" The Great Fox was almost there, the gate to the battlefield materializing, the Battleship making it's way out of the light. A soldier on the Cornerian flagship saw the energy readings go up dramatically. "Sir, detecting gate transmission outside the combat sector!...Great Fox! Command! It's the Star Fox team!"

A Dog in a white suit appeared on the view screen. "This is Admiral Hacket of the fifth fleet, it's nice to see you've all arrived. I'm sending you tactical data on the battlefield situation. Enemy strength has been reduced by 20 percent since the battle started a few hours ago. They still number in at 19 destroyers, 13 cruisers, 6 battleships, and a 2 aircraft carriers. My fleet will provide diversionary assistance for your team to break through the enemy fleet. Try and destroy what you can, it'll ease the load for us. Oikonny is holed up at the rear of the enemy formation in an odd looking ship, It's been designated a heavy cruiser, but who knows what it could be."

The screen split in the middle as the Admiral was pushed to one side

of it, another screen opening on the opposite side, revealing Colonel Ballard. "I'll send in 20 heavy interceptors at your rear, to keep any enemies that tail you from getting in any lucky shots. General Pepper's orders for you are to focus mainly on Oikonny's flagship, so get in there and take him down. Ballard out" The screen became whole again, the Admiral nodding. "Precisely. Now get prepped and go!"

Fox turned to his team. "You heard the Admiral, let's get in there before the fleet takes all the fun!" The team gave a roar of agreement and turned to the bridge doors, quickly making their way to the hangar bay, accompanied by Slippy to finish up the four ship formation.

As the doors to the hangar opened, the ships appeared, tinted red by the battlestation status lights. Each pilot jumped into their Arwing, Fox performing a comm check on each Arwing. "Communications line: green." Peppy's voice came over the speakers in each ship. "Oikonny is no pushover, so be careful out there" ROB had been putting in commands, releasing the locks on the ships., his robotic monotone blaring into the ears of each team member. "Lift lock released."

The heavy steel doors at the end of the hangar opened, revealing the skirmish in the distance, blue and red lasers shooting across the background of space, dimmed by the bright atmosphere of Fortuna hanging behind the skirmish. Peppy continued "The outcome of this battle hangs on you team, are you all ready?" He gave a pause, then added. "Launch 11 ships!"

The interceptors rocketed forward into space, each one going into a spin and releasing the lock on the wings to let them pop from the ship hulls and extend to give them maximum maneuverability. Each ship pulled away from each other, rocketing off to different sections of the battlefield.

Fox opened up the comm line between the team's Arwings. "All ships: avoid the armad's fire, aim for Oikonny's flagship" He heard the team members chatter go up as he began shooting down enemy ships. Slippy piped up, making himself known "Here we go!" Krystal snapped at him over the channel. "Hey, Slippy! Don't get cocky!" Falco broke into the conversation as well. "Slippy! You've already got bogeys on your tail!"

Fox spotted Slippy's ship out of the corner of his eye, rolling and diving to try and avoid the enemy fire. "Uh-oh, I'm in trouble!" Fox rolled and pulled in behind the enemies, quickly dispatching them with ease. Slippy called in with gratitude. "Thanks Fox! I thought I was a goner." Falco, pulling his arrogant tone in brought down the reminder that Slippy was still the same. "You haven't changed a bit frog boy"

Fox evaded a huge enemy fighter wing, pulling the trigger on the ship's lasers rapidly and decimating most of them. ROB entered the channel, giving a status report. "Cornerian fleet beginning third volley of cannon fire, Andross's ships being destroyed one after the other." Falco received a large morale boost upon hearing this. "We can't give up now!" Slippy continued to evade enemy cannon fire, almost getting hit. "Andross's fleet is dead ahead, They're everywhere!" Peppy broke in with orders. "Okay, Falco and Slippy, take the left side, Fox and Krystal, you take the right! Strike now!"

Fox and Krystal pulled off toward a cluster of ships, spotting a wave of fighters emerge from behind them. Krystal was enjoying it immensely. "Alright! Hit 'em hard and don't hold back!" Fox saw a glowing portion of some of the ships, and went with his instincts. He began pulling off as many shots as he could, hitting each spot dead in the center. He was rewarded with huge explosions, the ship breaking apart in front of him, allowing him to pass through the debris and do the same to the next few ships.

Krystal's voice came through again, and everyone could tell she was having a blast, so to speak. "Excellent! The enemy's offensive power is down!" Fox passed through more ship debris as a mech appeared in front of him. "What's that! Is that some sort of prototype?" Fox had to roll out of the way to avoid the beam shot at him. Peppy tried to give him advice. "Watch out, that beam is devastating! Do a barrel roll to deflect his attack!"

Suddenly, more lasers joined Fox's and Krystal came from under him, destroying the mech. "Look out! Troops down below!" She rolled and dove, attacking the ships firing at Fox from below. "Thanks Krystal" He said as more of the battleships from earlier appeared. He opened fire on them yet again, decimating three more.

He turned his ship, Fortuna filling his view. Slippery got multiple contacts on his radar, and went on to inform Fox. "Got something on radar, dead ahead and coming this way!" Krystal said something too. "A stealth squadron, look out Fox!" Fox saw pinpoints of light forming dead ahead, and they eventually formed into ships, revealing missiles and aiming at him. His fur bristled and he quickly began jamming the triggers, destroying the ships quickly and moving on.

Fox was closing in on an odd looking ship. "I'm coming closer to that ship the Colonel was talking about, it must be the flagship!" The ship was beginning to turn towards the planet, accelerating towards it. Fox cursed under his breath. ROB piped in. "The enemy flagship is fleeing to Fortuna." Falco accelerated as well, catching up to Fox. "That scum Oikonny is getting away!" The other ships formed on Fox's wing as Peppy ordered them to go after it.

All four Arwings ignited their afterburners, reaching maximum speed. "Keep moving, follow him into the atmosphere! Adjust G-Diffuser system output" The ships all began to move faster as they entered the top of the atmosphere, cones of fire forming over the noses of the ships. The Arwings began to rumble as Peppy called in more directions. "Oikonny seems to have fled, but he may be lying in wait for us. I want all of you to proceed with caution." The Arwings continued to accelerate as Falco responded with his usual arrogant natured tone. "Worrying a bit much, aren't ya gramps?" Fox ignored Falco and gave his own orders. "Let's take it in low"

After several moments, the ships got to cloud level, the fire on their noses fading away as they continued into the jungle. The ships broke out of their diamond formation Falco looking for the flagship. "Where did that crazed chimp Oikonny go?" Fox looked as well. "ROB, find that black hearted ape's location." ROB began scanning the planet back in the Great Fox. "Affirmative." Falco dove in from the sky, emerging into Fox's field of view. "Fox, these guys are all over me, get rid of 'em!" Fox pinpointed each enemy ship and blew it out

of the sky, Falco's reluctant voice playing through the speakers.
"Great, guess I owe you one"

ROB broke through again, bringing a status update. "Enemy base located directly ahead. Oikonny is there as well." "Fox pushed the throttle in a bit more. "All right! This time we take that ape down!" The team emerged upon a large set of doors. Slippy and Krystal breaking through. "This must be it." Krystal's telepathy picked up on something. "Huh? Look out! The enemy is waiting for us!" Sure enough, when the gates opened, an enemy squadron appeared and began firing on Fox.

He shot them down and continued moving through the base, tanks and more ships appearing to fire on him. He was able to destroy most of them, but then he saw another pair of steel doors, they opened, revealing Oikonny's ship passing by. Krystal and Fox noticed it. "There he is! It's Oikonny!" Fox opened a comm channel to Oikonny. "You've got nowhere to run to!" The ape responded with a disgusted tone, not happy that his defenses had done nothing to slow them down. "Bleh! Persistent little pests aren't you?"

The ship accelerated and turned around, stabilizing itself in a reverse movement. "That's enough hide-and-seek!, let me show you my true power!" Fox grimaced. "Oikonny you ignorant ape, what are you up to now!" Peppy was able to hear it all, keeping tabs on the battle, he had analyzed the ship and had a little more advice. "Careful Fox...You never know what a cornered beast might do"

The ship began to transform, the engines becoming hands, and part of the main hull forming into a metallic face resembling that of Oikonny himself. "I must bring an end to our relationship...DIE!" The Arwings accelerated to keep up, Fox still making a disgusted face. "You think you can win? Don't make me laugh" The Arwings accelerated towards the enemy.

Slippy began scanning it, bringing up results in seconds. "Shield analysis complete, bringing it up on the monitor" Falco noticed the resemblance just as much as Fox had. "Whats this? An Andross wanna-be?" Apparently, Oikonny had taken offense to the remark. "W-watch your mouth! I'll show you!"

The ship's hand opened and a blue orb was revealed. Fox remembered his battles with Andross, and began shooting at them, destroying the hand quickly. Andrew slammed the other fist on the ground in anger, quickly bringing it back as if to punch Fox, but it was dodged. Fox took aim again as the hand was open and destroyed it as well, causing the ship to malfunction.

It looked as if Andrew would retreat, as he always did, but instead he was laughing. "Is that all you fools have got? I am the one true heir to the great emperor Andross, the new emperor: Andrew Oikonny!" Almost as soon as he finished this sentence, a beam of light came from nowhere and shot through the main head, destroying the ship and causing it to plummet to the ground.

Fox didn't know what to think now as he observed the wreckage. "What? Reinforcements?" A large object emerged from the sky, hitting the ground and unfurling, revealing what looked like a giant mechanical moth. Falco didn't like the looks of it, a quick scan revealing it was organic and mechanical. "That doesn't look friendly..." The moth

curled up again and pointed it's tail at the ships as ROB blared over the speakers. "APAROID! APAROID! APAROID!" The beam fired at Krystal, almost hitting her, but she was able to roll in time to avoid it

Fox growled to the team over the comm. "There's no time to hesitate, return fire!" Slippy once again scanned the enemy, bringing it's shield status up on the monitors in each Arwing. Falco and Fox began firing on the moth's wings, glowing spots on them fluctuating each time they were hit, it's shields dropping quickly. "I don't know who that is, but he obviously ain't nice" The wings all took too much damage, and disintegrated

The moth flailed in what looked like anger, it's head pulling back and revealing a pink spot as it fired again. Fox began firing on the pink spot, the damage meter falling lower and lower as it took damage. Fox hit the pink bulb enough, and eventually the moth began to spark and smoke, crashing to the ground. A small emblem falling out of the destroyed bulb. Peppy was it from the camera on Fox's Arwing. "Fox! You have to get that!" Fox raised an eyebrow "really? Well, okay" He swooped won and got out of the Arwing, grabbing the object.

Slippy had an eye on the sky as he saw a fleet of the moths coming from the sky. "F-Fox! We should get out of here!" Fox looked as well, and quickly got back into the Arwing. The team retreated from the planet, quickly landing in the Great Fox and pulling out of the system, the Cornerian fleet already almost gone.

As soon as they were back in orbit around Corneria, The object was sent off to the station from before. Falco and Slippy remained on the bridge as Fox and Krystal looked at the planet from one of the main viewing areas that had been installed into the ship. Fox looked over at her, smiling.

"So, how did you like your first battle Krystal?" She grinned at him. "It was exhilarating! I've never been so thrilled before!" She was ecstatic about it. Fox smiled and thought about something for a moment, his eyes narrowing a bit in thought. Krystal noticed and turned to him. "Is something wrong?" Fox shook his head. "No, nothing, but I have something to ask you." Krystal tilted her head, wondering what it was. "Hmm?" Fox smiled a bit. "Would you like to have lunch with me when we get back to Corneria?" He asked. Krystal smiled at him. "Yes, I'll just have to check my schedule" She said, joking with him. He smirked "Oh, alright. I hope you can make time in your busy schedule to have lunch with me" Krystal giggled softly, her eyes narrowing a bit as the two turned back to the window, watching the planet from orbit.

So, Fox finally made a move. I hope you guys enjoyed this chapter. I'm starting to bring them closer together. If you wanna see a video of the first mission, which I've based this chapter off of mostly, look on my youtube account GreatFoxUltra. Anyway, Next chapter will either focus on the lunch between Krystal and Fox, or on the second mission, so I'm gonna let you guys wonder which one I do :3 I'm also glad this chapter was as long as it is. Until next time!

7. The date

**So, starting on the next chapter now. I'm gonna try to make this

one as long as chapter 6 was. I have a better idea than Fox and Krystal having lunch together, because we all know Fox gets really awkward around Krystal when they're alone. Wanna know what I've changed it to? Then read on and find out!**

Fox stared off into space. He was stuck in yet another meeting. He didn't like being encased in the conference room like this. The battle for Fortuna had ended only a few hours before, and now he was forced back into the dull gray conference room with the rest of the brass.

The object that he had recovered after fighting the moth had been revealed to be a core memory, a key part of the machine-organic race called the aparoids, meaning that ROB had been right when he had yelled over the channel about it when the team had first encountered the enemy.

General Pepper stood in the center of the room, holding up the core memory for the rest of the officers to examine. Fox leaned over to Damon next to him, attempting to ask if he knew anything about it. "Have you ever seen anything like this?" He whispered. The black vulpine turned towards him, pointing to his eyepatch. "Yeah, 17 years ago, I was still a Lieutenant back then, and my fur wasn't black. A entire Cornerian armada was decimated by a sole aparoid, not unlike the one you and your team faced on Fortuna. Only a few ships made it out, and when the attack started, pieces of the interior were falling apart all over us. I got a piece of shrapnel to the eye" He explained

Fox shuddered, General Pepper looking over from his location upon hearing the conversation. "If I remember correctly, Colonel Ballard was a survivor of an aparoid attack many years ago. Would you like to explain, Damon?" The vulpine nodded, standing and going to the General. "I'm sure many of you were still cubs when the 7th fleet was destroyed on a scouting mission all those years ago. The media covered it up to prevent widespread panic from thoughts of the aparoids coming here after finishing our fleet up. It seems that now they're doing just that. We've already received reports that Fortuna has been taken over by the battlegroup that descended on the planet during our battle with rebel forces. I took the time to launch a recon probe into orbit, and we're receiving both satellite imagery, and if need be, we can get live video feed."

A screen descended from the ceiling, the lights dimming. Fortuna appeared on the screen, still as vibrant and green as it had been during the skirmish. "This is Fortuna during our battle, this..." He hesitated, moving the slide forward to reveal a purple planet, glowing red orange veins scarring the surface. The atmosphere had turned a shade of pink. Damon went on. "...is Fortuna now. The aparoids have an ability to absorb whatever they choose. We've come to call this process aparoidation. The core memory we received, courtesy of the Star Fox team-" He nodded to Fox "-has given us a bit of information. However, it's not complete. It seems that aparoid commanders contain core memory's, and use them to control ground forces."

Fox sat forward in his chair, interested now. "I'm going to send the recon probe in for a look at the planet's surface." He pulled a data chip out of his jacket pocket, the soft clanging of his medals the only sound in the tense room. The purple planet that was Fortuna

began to rotate as the video feed started. He used the control panel in his hands to move it in towards the planet. Eventually, the probe broke through the atmosphere.

Fox's breath hitched in his throat as he saw the base from before. The aparoid moth's were everywhere, the air was easily visible, purple clouds swirling this way and that, the moths overseeing tanks and ships- all coated in the purple substance that had terraformed the planet to what it was.

Damon navigated the probe into a building just as the shadow of a moth covered it, barely being able to get it hidden. He slowly moved the probe through the building. Eventually, it got into command room, apes from the rebel army messing with the control panels in the room. One of them turned towards the probe, revealing his face and what aparoidation did to organics.

Half of the ape's face and body were coated in the thin sinewy veins from before, pink against the purple hexagons that had begun to form over him. He noticed that something wasn't supposed to be there, and pulled his blaster pistol out. It slowly found it's way towards the probe, pressed the barrel against the screen, and pulled the trigger.

The people in the room flinching as the screen flashed, burning the image into their retinas for a few moments. Fox shook his head, wiping his eyes. When the view finally cleared, the screen was covered in static, the letters "CONNECTION TERMINATED" scrolling across the sea of static in big red letters, bathing the officers in red light.

Damon set the control pad onto the table. "The aparoids have setup a base on Fortuna, and we're looking at a full scale war here if we don't prepare correctly. I have no further information on this subject, so I'll leave it to General Pepper and the science teams to find out more." He turned to Pepper, saluted, and returned to his seat next to Fox.

The hound waited for Damon to return to his seat, nodded, and looked around the room. "Just as Colonel Ballard has said, I'll have our science teams gather more data, but it would be easier if we had a complete core memory to study. I'm going to send out orders for more ships to be built, and training at the academy will increase. More officers and enlisted personnel will be conscripted, along with veterans and the jobless. I don't like the idea of a draft, but it'll be needed if we want a chance to survive this war."

The officers in the room looked round at each other, Fox and Damon locking eyes for a moment. Pepper waited for them to turn their attention back to him. "I have no further instructions for you all except to prepare for war to break out at any time. If any new information surfaces, you will all receive messages on your communicators, so keep an eye on them...Does anyone have anything to say?" He studied them for a moment, not receiving any hands. "Alright then...dismissed."

The occupants all stood up, the lights coming back on. He left with Damon, the room behind the vulpines erupting into murmuring and conversation about the possibility of war. Fox didn't know why, but he felt that one day very soon, he would be forced into a battle that

would test his skills and push him and his team to the limit.

Damon turned to Fox. "Fox, do you have plans for tonight?" Fox tilted his head to the side, one ear twitching, as if he was wondering whether he heard the senior officer correctly. "Um...no sir, I don't. Why do you ask?" Damon thought over his choice of words. "I was going to ask if you and your team wouldn't mind coming to the Christmas party held every year on Christmas eve, officers and enlisted personnel are invited, but the enlisted men usually leave quite early." Fox thought about it for a moment. "Alright, I'll ask them. I'll probably come, so I guess I'll see you there?" The older vulpine gave a rare smile. "Alright then. It's from 7 to 12, or later if you one of the few who stay. Also, I suggest bringing a date"

The Colonel winked at Fox, who had turned a soft shade of red at the mention of a date. Tonight was the night he had planned the lunch with Krystal. Wouldn't be much of a lunch by the time he got back anyway, so he decided he would ask her to the party.

Fox Thought of what to say to her on the drive back to the house. He eventually reached the driveway and got out. Trudging to the door, he slipped his key in, unlocking the door. He could hear every little sound. The reverberating thud of the door being unlocked, each moment feeling like an eternity.

He reluctantly dragged his feet inside. His legs felt like they were encased in thick leg, and he had grown cold from the nervousness, feeling a pit in his stomach. The vulpine made it to the stairs dragging his iron legs with him. His throat was dry. He had never been to good with girls, and it showed in his actions.

He couldn't think straight, his mind a jumble of thoughts. He was too caught up in his turmoil filled mind that he didn't even notice he had made it to Krystal's door. He tried to swallow, having trouble, and brought one arm up to knock on the door.

Just as his knuckle touched the white wood, it swung open, revealing the sapphire blue vixen. She was wearing a blue dress, slightly brighter than her fur. Fox could see the tiny golden earrings dangling from her ears, each with a small cerulean gem embedded in them. Her shoes, high heels matching the color of her dress, kept her about an inch off the ground in the back, and to top it all off, she was wearing a diamond necklace.

Fox didn't know what he said, but whatever erupted from his mouth must have been gibberish, as the vixen giggled, her navy blue eyes narrowing in amusement. "Fox, you missed the little lunch date we planned today, so if you don't mind, would you like to accompany me to the christmas party at Corneria Air Force base? Colonel Ballard called to tell me about it, so I got ready right away"

Fox thought for a minute, well, not so much thought as tried to overcome his awe, but eventually he composed himself, but soon began to stumble over his words. "O-of course! I'll go with you K-krystal!" The vixen giggled again, giving him the same look from before, bringing a paw up to cover her mouth. "Then go get ready, we'll have to leave soon if we want to make it"

He nodded repeatedly, quickly hurrying to his room to change into his uniform that Damon had told him wear. It was basically his normal

uniform, but it was black coated with blue pants, rather than the normal navy blue of air force pilots and the like. He quickly made his way back to Krystal, who continued to smile at him.

Fox was still very shy around her, offering her his arm to lead her to the car. The two foxes strapped in and returned to the base Fox had just come from, seeing the place was already filling up with guests. The two could see an ocean of the black and blue uniforms, and rivers of multicolored dresses, all making their way into one of the larger hangars that had been cleared to make room for everybody. Fox again offered Krystal his elbow and led her to the doors of the hangar.

The two had quite a hassle getting through the swarm of people, but once they got in, they quickly found a table where nobody was sitting, taking two of the 8 chairs and sitting down. Eventually, more people showed up, two dog soldiers, a 2nd Lieutenant and a Captain, and their wives. Two seats remained, and as fate had it, were soon taken by Colonel Ballard and his wife. Damon's wife had been a Cerinian as well, the two had emigrated to Corneria many years before the planet had been destroyed by Andross. Krystal gasped as she saw the other vixen's blue fur almost completely matched that of Mrs Ballard. Fox rose to shake the other Colonel's hand, also shaking his wife's hand before sitting back down.

The Omega Colonel smiled at Fox. "So, I see you got this beautiful young vixen to come with you, Fox? What did you have to do? Lure her here?" The group laughed, Fox turning a bright red, but the rapidly dimming lights kept anybody from seeing it. Krystal continued to look at the Colonel's wife. The vixen must have caught Krystal staring as she smiled at her. "You must be Krystal, I've heard about you a bit from Damon, how your quite a skilled pilot. My name is Hunter, and I'm pretty sure you already know where I'm from." Krystal nodded. "Yes, I'm Krystal, and thank you, I didn't know anybody else got past the destruction of Cerinia" She looked over at Damon. "Colonel, you're Cerinian too, correct?" The jet black vulpine nodded. "If you don't mind me asking, how did your fur turn black?" The wing commander exhaled a bit, then he brought forth a story of how the years of stress and battle had taken quite a toll on him. Krystal listened intently, letting it all soak in.

Krystal began to recall memories from Cerinia. She wondered why they were only showing up now. She shook her head, clearing the memories away, noting it as coincidence. The room had grown dark, General Pepper was standing on a makeshift stage of ammo boxes with wood pallets strapped together to form a stage.

The hound looked around the room for a moment, his sad looking eyes taking everything in, then he began. "I'd like to thank everybody for coming tonight. This party has turned out well every year we've done it so far, so let's keep it the same tonight, shall we? I don't have much to say except to enjoy yourselves tonight." The General replaced the microphone onto the stand, stepping off the crudely constructed stages, the ringing of his metals clanging together ringing throughout the quiet hangar, sounding like an old fashioned freight train, from before Corneria had upgraded to it's advanced technology many years before.

Before Krystal could ask more about them, the music began. The couple stood and moved to the dance floor, Krystal remained with Fox. He

turned to her. "Krystal? Is something wrong? You look...distracted" Krystal could barely hear him, her mind focused on the Colonel and his wife, her thoughts deafening her.

She shook her head, clearing it and turned to her date, smiling. "Of course Fox, just thinking a bit..." Fox tilted his head slightly, wondering if she wasn't just hiding anything from him, but he decided to leave it be.

Eventually, he worked up the courage to ask her for a dance. Standing up, the vulpine flashed a grin at her. "Would you like to dance, Krystal?" The vixen's eyes sparkled and she nodded, standing and taking his hand.

The two began dancing, having started on a slow dance number. They turned and twisted across the floor, coming into sight of the Colonel and his wife every now and then. Fox and Krystal kept looking into each others eyes, locking almost constantly. The number was about to end, and Fox took a dive. He leaned closer to Krystal, closing his eyes, and she did as well.

Mere inches before their lips touched, the power went out, an explosion was heard, and blaster fire rang out in the dark hangar.

** Sorry for the long time since the last update, and the short chapter, but I've been working on contacting Namco-Bandai and talking about a book for the Ace Combat series. School has started and I'm going to Drill Team practices, so I don't hve as much time as I used to. I hope you liked this chapter!**

8. Firestorm over Corneria

** Hi! I'm starting the next chapter now. My parents went to circuit city to get me an MP3 player, cus they had a sale, and ended up winning me a wii :D I got mario kart, metroid prime 3, and super smash bros brawl, if you guys wanna play over wifi, that is if you have it, my code is 0905-5158-4728. Now, on to the story!**

Fox couldn't hear anything, he was laying on his back, the ceiling looming over him. He saw blue and red blurs flashing across his view, the edges of his eyes fading to black. He fought to remain conscious. Shaking his head, he rolled under a chair, looking around and trying to clear his head. He looked around the room, trying to spot the Colonel and his wife, along with Krystal.

He couldn't find any of them, and crawled out from under the table, faint thuds echoing through his head, the blackness around his vision slowly clearing. He didn't see the roof anymore, it had been partially blown off, leaving him to see the faint indigo colored night sky, but as he looked around, he saw the sky melting into a burning orange tint. He continued to alter his view, and noticed smoke.

His eyes widened as he realized what was happening: Corneria was under attack. He didn't see anybody else, except for soldiers in full battle armor. How long had he been out? His hearing was coming back, a loud ringing replacing the dull thuds, the shrill whine of blaster fire accompanying it. He scrambled to the closest exit, seeing his

car. Damon's was gone, and Fox had no idea where the Colonel was.

Fox pulled his sleeve up as he sprinted the 100 meter distance from the crumbling hangar, pressing a few buttons on his communicator. He scrolled through the ID's and found Damon's, quickly punching in the command to message him.

Several moments passed, the sounds of battle fading from him as he got further and further away from the hangar. After what seemed like eternity, Damon's face appeared on the communicator, he had a small cut in his head, his uniform torn. "Colonel! Where are you?" Fox yelled. Damon's calm demeanor remained, despite the harrowing escape he had made. "Fox, Everybody that was there has been evacuated to a bunker on the north side of the base. I need you here now." He said, his voice full of urgency. Fox nodded. "Wait, is Krystal with you?" The Colonel moved his arm, the ceiling and walls taking up the screen as he shifted the view, revealing the blue vixen, a worried look on her face. Fox breathed a sigh of relief, the screen cutting to black again as he dove into his car, starting the engine.

As soon as his foot got to the ground, he shoved the accelerator pedal through the floor, his car fishtailing a bit and screeching like a banshee, the engine roaring like an angry Red Eye. He felt the acceleration tug at him as the car gained speed, hurtling down an empty runway towards the bunker. The communicator buzzed again with a class one priority stamp. It activated, General Pepper appearing on the screen.

"To all members of the Cornerian military and the civilian population, Corneria is under siege by an unknown enemy. At first, reports stated it was the aparoids, but now, we aren't so sure. Aparoids have been known to attack en masse, with no regard for their own lives. However, this has been carried out flawlessly, They emerged from a space gate and descended on the planet in rapid deployment ships, our defenses didn't know anything until the shots were fired at the military ball. One of our higher ranking members, the team leader of the former Star Fox team, has not shown up at the bunker. We have, however, just received word from Omega Colonel Ballard of the 66th fighter unit, 6th fighter squadron, that Colonel McCloud is okay. He's somewhere on the air force base, presumably making his way towards the bunker. Until we get any more information, all civilians and military personnel go into hiding, seal bunkers after 30 minutes or if any enemies begin to pour in on you. Pepper out"

Fox stomped on the accelerator, sending his car hurtling ever faster down the runway, blaster fire becoming more and more frequent in the distance. His grip tightened on the wheel, his knuckles turning white under the brown fur.

The bunker was quiet, the only sound being the rumble and bump of explosions above. The lighting had gone out, leaving the red backup lights to keep the room from falling into darkness. Every face in the room was rock hard, each of them in a minor state of shock, the faces of each male a mask of titanium, and over half of the women wore a veil of crimson fear.

Krystal's normally blue fur had clashed with the emergency lighting, leaving her a dark purple. Damon had been trying to get power

restored, but concluded with the wires being disrupted in an explosion or being shot out.

Nobody spoke, nobody moved, nobody even dared to breathe, almost as if the sound of their inhaling and exhaling could be heard by the unknown enemy, thinking they would be found and killed if they let out even the slightest breath.

The room was rocked by another explosion, everybody looking around. This one was much closer, and Damon took the bold move to whisper what he knew it was. "Seventy-Fives, buildings won't last long against those." He had heard the faint roar of the artillery piece going off. "These definitely aren't aparoids...all of our data on the aparoids have shown they use their own weapons, never an enemy's. We may be fighting a war on two fronts here..." His voice faded out as another boom came. Shells were dropping closer now.

Fox saw the bunker entrance, quickly stopping his car and jumping out, sprinting for the large doors that would lead into the depths of the base. He pounded on the door, simultaneously sending a message to Damon. The senior ranking Colonel quickly rushed to the door, grabbing Fox and yanking him inside.

Krystal had followed the officer, quickly latching onto Fox. "Oh Fox...I'm so glad you're alright" She said, her voice full of relief. "We thought something had happened to you" Fox didn't know what to say. Damon shushed the vixen, his eyes rolling around, as if searching for something. The booms were getting closer by the second.

He pulled them further into the bunker, the group that had taken shelter there following quickly. The Colonel dragged them down multiple corridors, branching off every 10 yards. The roar of the seventy-fives falling further and further away.

The big guns eventually faded to nothing, leaving the sound of their footsteps the only thing to break the silence they were in. The group trudged on for what seemed like hours, before finally stopping at a door. It had the insignia of the General of the armies. The Colonel pulled out a card key and slid it across a scanner on the door. Moments later, the solid door split in the middle, a seam melting down the center.

The dark hall was soon filled with bright lighting, Damon leading the group into the light. It took a few minutes to adjust to the brightness, but they managed to see after their eyes adjusted. Damon looked around, eying the screens flickering to life. Fox did likewise, spying a satellite feed of the planet.

Corneria was engulfed in smoke and flames, the normally blue planet coated in a sea of red and death. Fox's mouth dropped open, as did everybody else's. Damon and his wife stared at the screen before he walked over and pressed a button, a casualty figure list appearing.

His eyes scrolled down the list, breathing a small sigh of relief as he got to the end. He turned to his wife, whispering something in her ear that Fox could just barely make out

"He's alive"

The tank commander didn't know what was happening. He had been sleeping at the time, enjoying his relaxation time when the alarm blared and called for a full alert, his gunner shaking him awake, a panicked look on his face. "Jesse, get up! Corneria is under attack!" The First Sergeant got to his feet, running to grab his gear out of his locker as thoughts filled his mind and adrenaline filled his veins.

Time went slowly, he saw his name on his dog tags, noticing every little detail. He ran through everything in his head. "Name: Jesse L. Wolf, Rank: First Sergeant, Position: Tank Commander, 207th Cornerian M9AB Main Battle Tank Brigade, 117th Battalion, Bravo Company, 3rd Platoon, Serial Number: 2994725105." The Gunner watched the wolf scramble to the gear, his gray fur blending into the darkness cast by the smoke.

Jesse quickly put on his gear and grabbed his helmet, holstering his sidearm. "Come on, we've gotta get to the vehicle bay" Jesse sprinted out of the barracks, the gunner close behind him. He could hear explosions in the distance, his feet pounding against the pavement, and blood filling every crevice of his body, roaring through his ears. He looked to the left and saw the air tower to the air force base, no more than mile away, then looked to his right, and saw the blood red sky, his eyes widening as he took it in.

The Tank Commander could do no more than but to look straight ahead and try to get to the motor pool, where his beloved tank awaited him. It took only bout 45 seconds to get the rest of the way there. He quickly got into the top hatch when he could, vaulting over the driver's hatch and into the commander's seat. He looked to the gunner, the red fox that had woken him, Specialist Leon Kennedy The driver, Sergeant First Class Anthony Williams, a brown dog, and finally, the lupine's eyes rested on the loader, Private First Class Tyler Leopold. The loader hadn't even seen real combat, just recently transferring in from basic training, and he was scared, Jesse could tell.

Leopold's eyes were wide, and he was shaking slightly. The little white husky couldn't tell what he had gotten himself into, but Jesse planned to tell him. "Alright, get ready, we're mobilizing as soon as Lieutenant Pasternak gives the order." The tank crew all responded with positives and Williams started the MKIII "Devil Dog" Tank, affectionately named "War Hound" by the crew.

The crew listened to the engine idling while they waited for orders. After what seemed to be half an hour, the radio, filled with static, crackled into life. They recognized the voice as their commander, Lieutenant Pasternak. "2nd platoon, retr-...the nort-...Corneria Ci-...Has been over run, I re-...All 2nd pla-...ks, retreat Imm-...ly." The crew was listening intently. Were they being ordered to retreat? Jesse pulled up the Lieutenant on his communicator, but got more static. He began to fiddle with the communicator, speaking into it. "Say again Platoon Actual? This is War Hound, we do not make a solid copy on the last order. I repeat, no solid copy."

Only static would reply to the tank commander's futile tries for a response. He couldn't contact any of the other tank crews in the platoon, or even the company for that matter. "I guess we're retreating then, if the message was what I thought it was. Williams,

get us out of here and onto a plane out of here." The driver flipped down his visor and threw the steel behemoth into gear "Yes, sir"

Fox heard the alarms blaring, Damon did too, recognizing it instantly. "That's the alarm for a full alert, we need to get out of here _now_" Fox stared for a moment. "How are we going to get out of here?" He asked, his eyes gazing at the superior. Damon started to speak, but was cut off by the monitors and speakers behind him, turning to see what was wrong. "It's a message directed at all branches of the military..." His voice faded out as the message played. "This is AWACS Leviathan, all forces are to pull out, you are ordered to give up Corneria. I repeat, all forces pull out and warp to random planet's. We will form up on a later specified location to regroup and plan a counter attack. AWACS Leviathan out...good luck"

Fox's pupils dilated, the green orbs beginning to roll around rapidly. The Colonel next to him, despite his usually calm demeanor, was shocked. He didn't speak for awhile, but when he did, his voice was cold, an unusual change for him. "Back to the surface, there's a transport craft we can get. I'll fly it when everybody has been loaded. Fox, Krystal, I want you both flying air support until we get out of the atmosphere. Everybody else, make a break for it by following me. Am I clear?" The members of the room nodded, multiple 'yes sir's sounding through the room.

"Alright, go!" The vulpine took off down the hallway people scrambling to keep up with him. As he neared the door, he swiped his pass card and the bunker opened, filling the bunker with a dark red light from the setting sun, smoke casting shadows everywhere. The group spied the transport plane and sprinted after it.

Fox and Krystal broke off from the group and pounded down the runway, heading for their Arwings. Moments later, the immediate area roared as a shadow coated the area, leaving Fox, Krystal, and everybody that had been in the group to gaze up at what could possibly be the end of them. Fox saw the guns on the monstrous ship flare, and expected the worse as he was blinded by the intense white light.

Okay, now that I finally broke away from other stuff to get this finished, how did you guys like this chapter? I decided to drop the canon story line and add my own in :3 Jesse was, however, not character of mine. He belongs to Namigi, I just added a few of my own little touches. Anybody that's a veteran of the Ace Combat series can already see a few references, using the "you have been ordered to give up Corneria is an almost exact quote from Ace Combat 6: Fires of Liberation, where your AWACS support says "You've been ordered to give up Gracemeria." Anyway, I started this 2 weeks ago, so the stuff mentioned in the foreword is old news. I hope you guys enjoyed this chapter, and Namigi, if I didn't put your character in the way you wanted, sorry, I just felt he would be fun to use like this, and, as always, you guys keep reviewing, I'll keep writing!

9. Exodus

**So, who likes how I left off? I'm still thinking of what they are and whatever, but please, message me some ideas on what you guys wanna see, and whatever I like, I'll put in and give credit for

helping me, just like I added in Namigi's OC (with his permission of course) and good news, today on the 8****th**** of september, I was promoted to Cadet Sergeant First Class, Platoon Sergeant for 1****st**** Platoon, Charlie Company! I would have been platoon leader, which is 2****nd**** Lieutenant, but a LET 4 took it, even though I was better =_= anyway, on to the story!**

The flash faded from Fox and Krystal's eyes as they stood together, trying to shake off the burned in image of two heavy cannons firing. Once the smoke and white disappeared, Fox recognized the distinct shadow of the hull: The Great Fox was hovering no more than 50 meters above them, providing heavy fire support for any Cornerian ground Forces.

Slippy had done a fine job remodeling the old girl. The ship was much sleeker, and had a dark silver tint to it, the cannons looked bigger and more ominous. The ship also had missile launchers clipped on each of the four wings, the dorsal fin on top holding a powerful rail gun system, one cannon on each side of it, the Star Fox symbol standing out, a crimson flash against the darkened hull. Fox and Krystal were awestruck, but the dreadnaught fired again, the roar of the cannons snapping them out of the stupor.

Fox quickly got an idea as they continued to run toward the arwing hangar. He quickly dialed Damon on the comm channel. "Colonel, change of plans, the Great Fox is overhead, get the group closer and I'll get ROB to lower the hangar bay closer to the runway." The black vulpines face on the other end was stationary among the flashes or lights that coated the hangar he was in. He nodded, turning to the group and waving to follow him, the channel cutting out as he changed their course and explained the plan.

Fox and Krystal were upon the hangar in moments, quickly leaping into their ships and starting the engines, Fox feeling the engines rumble to life, hearing Krystal's ship roar as well. He knew any person that was nearby, had the planet not been under siege, they would wonder what it was, yet still be in awe. He quickly punched in the mothership command channel and got ROB on the line, spotting the robot in the newly designed bridge. "ROB, lower the ship's altitude, a group of survivors is coming aboard." The robot reached around, continued to scramble at typing in all the commands. "Affirmative. Ship will be lowered in approximately 29 seconds." The robots monotone cut out as the orders were processed, the channel going dead.

The two fighters, having also been remodeled, used their hover engines to get out onto the runway, ignoring the traditional taxi method that they would normally prefer. The moment they were out of the hangars, they rocketed up, quickly gaining altitude. Fox got comm check on Krystal. "Krystal, do a systems check, I wanna make sure we're both ready for the long run in this one, because it doesn't look like we're getting out easy here." Krystal clicked her comm, meaning yes.

Fox began his own check, ll systems running green. "Alright, turn on radar, I wanna see what we're up against..." He flicked a few switches, the little panel buzzing to life. He saw the silhouette of the Great Fox lowering out of the corner of his eye, the readings next to the ship's radar signature changing. He continued to glare at it as the group below scrambled onto the dreadnaught.

Krystal's face emerged on his comm channel, her face scrunched up in concentration. "Fox, three single ship's approaching...no make that four, four Wolfen class interceptors inbound at high speed!" Fox didn't know what to think know. Was Star Wolf an ally? And why was this fourth ship involved? He didn't have much time to think s the four ships were upon them in seconds, quickly losing speed and hovering around them.

Their weapons weren't arming, so that was a good sign. Wolf's face appeared on the screen next to Krystal. "So, you made it out alive Fox...good, that means I get to take you down then...when the time comes" He said, flashing a small grin. Fox rolled his eyes slightly, smirking at Wolf's rivalry with him. "Alright, whatever you say Wolf. Are you retreating with the rest of the military?" Wolf nodded. "We don't exactly fit in with everybody else, and we saw your ship headed this way, so we followed it, hope you don't mind us hanging around for a while." Fox already knew Wolf was going to stay whether he liked it or not. "Sure Wolf, stick with us, we can use the firepower." The ships formed around the Great Fox, which had begun to gain altitude, floating lazily into the sky.

"Fire!" Jesse yelled, ordering the gunner to arm the main cannon and take out the infantry in the distance. The shot was spot on, leaving none standing. The Cornerian Tank had been rolling down the highway, the airbase coming into sight.

"Im gonna try to raise that ship over there, it has Cornerian IFF." He punched in the hail code on the comm in the tank, grabbing the mic. "This is First Sergeant Wolf of the Cornerian army, callsign "War Hound", 207th Tank Brigade, 11\th Battalion, Bravo Company, Third Platoon. Is anyone reading me? We have been separated from our platoon, we have received no word on survivors. I repeat, we are the only confimed survivors in our platoon, maybe even our company. Over." He only heard static for a few seconds, a voice slowly coming through the sea of white noise. "This is Colonel Mccloud, 66th fighter squadron, 6th fighter wing, I read you War Hound. Head to the air force base, we have enough space for you on board, roll on down here, six fighters are coming in for an escort, Colonel Mccloud out." The commander was stunned. He hadn't expected anyone to respond after so many futile attempts of communication. He looked at Williams. "You heard the Colonel, punch it! I want us there now!"

Fox relayed orders to the rest of the formation. "Form on me, we've got a tank by the callsign War Hound", they need out of there and we're the only way they're getting out, so let's move!" Fox punched the throttle lever, sending it to the max, the Wolfens and lone Arwing following behind him. Fox heard an alarm blaring, and quickly saw the alert. "Break off, Break off! Heavy AAA in the area! Get some dirt on those wings if you don't wanna get shot full of holes!" The flak came out of nowhere, the explosive shells popping and sending shrapnel everywhere around the flight of fighters, black clouds forming from the explosions.

The highway was coming into view as the fighters skimmed over the trees. As each ship passed, they rolled belly up and each fighter pilot spotted War Hound, making it's way to the airport, not even half a kilometer away. The tank was accelerating, meaning the ships were going to have an easy escort job of it. Not long and the 8 tons of Cornerian built death dealer was hurtling down the runway, making

it's way to the ramp that had been set up at the Great Fox's forward hangar bay.

As the armored behemoth disappeared into the depths of the ship, the fighters escorting it peeled away and formed on each of the four wings the battleship employed, following it into the blood red sky.

As the 6 pilots landed in the bay, Fox noticed there were two more Arwings already in the bay. "ROB, have Falco and Slippy already landed in the ship?" The robot's voice buzzed over the speakers. "Affirmative. Falco and Slippy escorted the Great Fox through the southern district, providing ground support to allied Cornerian tanks. They are on their way to the bridge now." Fox's eyes narrowed a bit, but he ignored his thoughts.

As each pilot disembarked from their respective ships, he saw the fourth Wolfen remained closed, but as he turned to Wolf, the cockpit hatch hissed and opened, and a snow white husky emerged. It was the same one from the terminal when Fox and Falco had landed at the airport after leading Star Wolf to land a few weeks before.

The husky gave a smile, the corners of her mouth twitching up the slightest amount. Fox didn't know what to say, thankfully, Krystal said it for him. "Well, I guess make yourselves at home, considering that's what the Great Fox is now that we've lost Corneria." She stated dryly. Everyone in the room could feel her anger at losing yet another planet. The Star Wolf team all nodded, Wolf speaking for each of them. "Thank you. We wouldn't have made it back to Sargasso." Fox nodded. "It's alright Wolf. Each room has a name on the door, and due to them being electronic now, if Slippy's boasting about the new design has anything to say, they change in real time, so there are four rooms with your names on them, next to ours."

Wolf nodded, "thank you" was all he said. He led his team out of the hangar, the husky following him closely. Fox turned to Krystal, looking at her. Her dress had a tear near the bottom, and her heels had both been forcibly broken off on both of the shoes. Her hair had been messed up as well, giving her a fierce beauty. Krystal sighed as she looked out of the slowly closing hangar doors, staring at the firestorm below.

Fox turned her away from it, shaking his head. "Come on, let's go see what we need to do." Krystal nodded slightly as the vulpine turned her away from the scene. The two foxes made their way through the newly installed atrium, an area Slippy had designed for when the crew wanted to try and escape from the metal hallways of the Great Fox. Krystal stopped and looked around the room, spotting a window and going to it.

She saw the reddening Corneria out of the corner of her eyes, but didn't look at it, instead she saw a meteor heading for the planet. It was going to burn up in the atmosphere, and she knew it. Fox took her hand in his slowly. "Make a wish, Krystal" She closed her eyes and smiled softly, and after a few moments, the cerulean eyes opened and she turned to Fox "I was already about to get a wish and then an explosion ruined it." Fox tilted his head as the vixen's eyes narrowed a bit in amusement.

"Fox, your so clueless about things you know..." Her voice trailed

off as she started moving towards him, and slowly the gap between them shortened and Krystal kissed him. Fox's eye widened, as he was shocked, but he quickly overcame it, his eyes closing as well. The vulpine wrapped his arms around her waist, the meteor outside burning up as this all happened. The two foxes melted together, and anybody that would have walked in would have seen the two Star Fox team members locked in the embrace against the stars glittering in space.

Okay, not as long as my normal chapter, but oh well, I wanted to get this chapter out so I can skip ahead to the end of the transition to the rendezvous point and so on. I'm finally getting Fox and Krystal closer together :3 anyway, I need to go back and change a name. If you pay attention to the chapters, you'll see the change. So, review it and I'll keep writing more. Jeremy Softpaus is probably my most devoted reader XD thanks jeremy, I enjoy getting your reviews. So I'll have the next chapter started who knows when, wont be able to work on it tomorrow, the 11**th****, cus I'll be volunteering at Rockfest. Direct traffic for 4 hours and in return get fed three square meals and get admission to a 40 dollar per ticket concert free? Good deal. **

10. Bastion

** Alright, I'm gonna start this chapter up. I got on before bed, the day after uploading the last chapter, and saw that criticalkill had left a huge review. I started reading it and I was happy to see that people were liking my story so much. It's technically the first story I'm actually writing out. I'm still just a beginner, and that shows in the first 2 or 3 chapters. Thanks for the great review criticalkill. I'm glad I can write a story and get such a positive review. Anyway, on to the story!**

The Great Fox lumbered through space. Only a few hours had passed since Corneria had come under fire and forced a complete military retreat under the iron fist of this new enemy. The dreadnaught had formed up with another Cornerian battle-group, the formation was now making it's way to a planet in the outer rim of the Lylat System, one that wasn't known to very many. Only handful of Corneria's highest ranking officers knew about, and the amount to have seen and been within a million kilometers could be counted on one finger. That was all about to change.

Fox and Krystal both still had the kiss in their minds, causing each of them to blush whenever they looked at each other. Everybody on the bridge could tell what had happened simply by being near them. Falco wouldn't let either of them forget that he would never let them live this down. Slippy was calibrating the computers in the bridge along with ROB. Wolf and his apparent girlfriend gazed out the bridge windows. Leon remained quiet, as if plotting his next sinister move, and Panther, the blackish purple feline would sometimes gaze over at Krystal, immediately turning away if she looked at him.

Fox didn't like the way Panther did this, and he wouldn't hesitate to protect Krystal if the feline made a move. He turned to Slippy, tapping the toad on the shoulder to get his attention. "Are the Arwings and Wolfens unlocked?" Slippy nodded. "Of course, I always keep the hanger open in case of emergency". Fox nodded, laying his hand on the engineers shoulder for an instant to let the toad go back

to work. "Alright, stay ready to move to your ships in case anything happens. I don't wanna get caught off guard." The other pilots all nodded at him, indicating they would be ready at a moments notice.

Fox heard a pinging noise and turned to see a giant envelope on the bridge screens, a message waiting for them. It blinked red, citing a high priority message encased inside. Fox tapped a few buttons on the console, the message opening. General Pepper's face appeared. "Fox, I hear you've joined up with the 13th Cornerian Battle-group It's one of our elite formations. I also come to understand you're working with Star Wolf and have saved a Cornerian Tank. Good job, Fox. I'm relaying the coordinates to the rendezvous point now. I hope to see you soon. Pepper out"

The hounds face disappeared, replaced by a star chart that ROB quickly began deciphering and converting into the correct coordinates. The coordinates were then sent to each ship in the battle-group. Even if they hadn't been an elite unit, they would have been more than a match should an enemy fleet show up. The battle-group consisted of eight destroyers, eight light cruisers, six heavy cruisers, a battleship, an aircraft carrier, and the new flagship, The Great Fox.

Fox knew, however, they should avoid any fleet engagements, they needed every ship they had at full strength if they intended to mount a counter attack. ROB broke Fox's train of thought with a grating monotone. "Fox. I have received and plotted our course. However, there is no known planet located there. Should I recheck the coordinates?" Fox's brow furrowed in thought. How could ROB be wrong? "Go ahead, try again." The results ended the same, prompting Fox to grab the communicator, but as he wrapped a gloved hand around it, he bridge doors opened, and Damon entered.

"The coordinates are correct. ROB, plot the course and go, synchronize with the battle-group and prepare to jump." The robot hesitated for a moment, processing this, and finally sent the orders through, resulting in the fleet tearing a hole through space and disappearing into the abyss.

A few moments passed as Fox stared at the officer. "Only a handful of Corneria's top brass know about the planet, myself being one of them. There's a reason the planet isn't seen on any star chart. It's because it was to a fall back area in case Corneria either ran out of resources or the planet was taken over. Military satellites encircle the planet, and fallout bunkers are located under the oceans. The continents are covered in lush vegetation, and in certain places, we have built air fields, navy bases, and military depots. Our arrival time will be four hours judging by our current location."

The people on the bridge were speechless, each of them wondering how he was able to get specifics on the planet that didn't exist. Damon looked around, studying their faces and seeing everything they were thinking by pure facial expression. The mouths slightly open, the pupils dilated, and the ears twitching all betrayed their awe. He smiled a bit, visible only due to the corner of his mouth curling up by a few centimeters.

The Colonel nodded at everybody and turned on his heel, leaving the bridge with the amused quirk of a grin still on his face. The moment

the bulkhead closed, every person in the room looked at each other, clearly not knowing what to think of it. Krystal spoke up, her accent seeping through. "Alright, we have four hours to kill. Let's do something to get ready for planet fall."

Everybody nodded as Slippy went to ROB, beginning to rewire him for more optimal war-time operations. Wolf and the rest of the Star Wolf team left and made their way to the hangar to check the Wolfens, Falco leaving with them to tune his own Arwing. Fox and Krystal looked at each other and blushed, each of them looking away almost immediately as they made eye contact.

Krystal, her blush showing through as a purple tint on her sapphire furred cheeks, her tail twitching back and forth in embarrassment. ROB, from under Slippy's wrench, decided it would be a good idea to pipe in. "I sense tension in the room building. Is everything all right, Fox? Is everything all right, Krystal?" The two fox's turned and glared at the navigation robot. "No!" they both yelled, each of them turning as they noticed the other had said the same thing, blushing even more and turning away yet again.

Krystal started to stutter slightly and quickly left the bridge, already heading for her private quarters. Fox's cheeks continued to burn still hotter as the time went by, causing him to sit there, red in the face in the wake of Krystal's leaving.

Slippy turned and looked at his childhood friend. "Something wrong Fox?" he asked, a chuckle escaping and mixing with his question. Fox shook his head and stood, stuttering something about going to get ready for their arrival as he quickly left the room, Slippy's laughter erupting after the bulkhead sealed, leaving Fox to listen to the laughter fade away as he traversed the gray halls of the flagship.

As he made his way further into the heart of the Great Fox, he could hear only the sounds of his footsteps thudding against the steel floors, and his heart pounding softly in his chest. It didn't take long for him to reach his quarters. He pressed a gloved hand against the scanner, the door sliding open without a sound.

The vulpine took the few steps into his room, flopping onto his bed and sighing into the blankets so he could think about the day's events. Corneria was under siege, the military had evacuated and was retreating across the Lylat System in the face of an enemy they knew nothing about, and he had kissed the woman he had secretly been harboring a crush on since the day he had rescued her, almost a year before.

Fox sighed and rolled over. He needed a shower, and to get out of this ripped and charred uniform. He slowly and monotonously pulled the tattered uniform off and grabbed a towel from his closet, making his way to the bathroom. He stood in the bathroom, looking in the mirror as the shower heated up. The vulpine looked tired and disheveled, and he was.

As the water finally heated to his preferred setting, he stepped in, but just stood under the water, continuing to think. He didn't think long, however, as he knew four hours wasn't very long when you had your mind set on something. He quickly washed his fur and brushed his teeth and went to his closet, looking through his clothes.

He looked at his armor, the green and red jumpsuit looked dull and unappealing, but he grabbed it anyway, and began looking for ways to make it look better. He eventually found two crimson shoulder pads, the left one holding a small silver Star Fox insignia on it. He equipped the jumpsuit and pads and grabbed the crimson boots that went with the pads. He knew it was missing something as he looked in the mirror, then it hit him.

Fox looked deep into his closet and grabbed an armored vest. It looked shiny and silver in the light of the interdimensional space the ship was traversing. As he slipped the vest over his armor, he knew it was perfect.

As he looked it over in the mirror, the lights flickered out for a moment. He looked out the window and saw stars twinkling...right next to a giant green and blue planet. He tilted his head and studied it, but the small ship-wide communicator in his room beeped, a message waiting for him. As he pressed the button, Slippy turned from the bridge controls and pointed to the bridge viewscreen. "We need you up here Fox, General Pepper needs you."

Fox nodded. "Got it, I'll be there in a moment." He closed the channel and dashed out of the room, pounding back down the hallway to the bridge, the bulkhead sliding open as he came within a certain distance. Everybody was there, including the Cornerian tank crew, Star Wolf, and the group they had saved at the ball earlier.

The viewscreen held General Peppers face, waiting calmly for Fox to arrive, and the moment he did, the screen split and the planet below them showed up, data scrolling across that half of the screen. "This is Bastion, our fallback planet. We knew that one day, Corneria would be taken, so we spent decades preparing it. Hundreds of military bases are scattered over the planet. Military personnel from all over the galaxy are stationed here as part of a treaty signed many years ago, at the end of the lightning wars, one of the deadliest conflicts in our history. Whoever this new enemy is, they are prepared for a long war, but using capital grabbing tactics, they may be the same enemies from the lightning wars. We have also received word that Katina, Fortuna, Fichina, Venom, Zoness, Aquas, Macbeth, and Sectors X, Y, and Z have been overrun by his new enemy."

Fox listened intently to the General, and judging by the tension in the air, everybody else wanted to know exactly what was happening. "Until further information is gained, we will call this new enemy 'Serpentis', as our security teams managed to see scaled, winged creatures attacking the city. Serpentis, however, is only a generalization, and we have no further information than a name and a very faint appearance. Now, bring in the battle-group and all officers will be briefed on the plan of attack. Pepper out"

Fox turned to the crew as the message ended. "You guys heard the General, get ready, we'll be planet-side in a few minutes. ROB, get us down there to a docking position." The robot turned to the controls, silently setting to his task as the formation tilted toward the planet and the hulking steel warships dropped into the atmosphere, fire in their wakes as they started the first step of retaking their system: making a plan.

****Alright, I hope you guys enjoyed this chapter, and I'll start work**

on the next one soon, so until next time, you guys keep reviewing,
and I'll keep writing!**

11. The Halycon Treaty

Alright, I hope you guys enjoyed my last chapter. I'm shedding a bit of light on who attacked Corneria, but this may turn into a crossover sooner or later â€" MAY. Not a guarantee, but, just an early warning. So, I'm enjoying reading the reviews I'm getting, I check my email and it always makes me happy to see a review email waiting in my inbox, then I read them and I'll think them over, and in turn it helps me think of what to put in the story. My reviews were dead for a bit, but now they're alive again, ALIVE! *cue Frankenstein scene* So, now that they've found their fallback planet, what do you guys think will happen? Read on and find out!

Fox felt the gravity regulators kick in as the battle-group entered the planet's atmosphere. Bastion, a fitting name for fortress planet. Would it be unbreakable? Would it fall if this new enemy attacked? What was their plan of action? Only time would tell. He looked around the room with his eyes, not moving his head. Everybody in the room looked emotionless, not a single crease in their faces indicating anything they were thinking about. Fox knew that Krystal, Damon, and his wife could probably read their minds, but he doubted they would do it.

Wolf sat in one of the chairs next to the weapons station, his arms crossed and his characteristic half frown, half smile plastered to his mug, his right eye closed and his left eye missing, covered by the electronic eye, relayed nothing of his thoughts. Leon and Panther stared out the windows, as if they weren't interested in anything. Olivia, the apparent newest member of the team, sat silently next to Wolf, as if she didn't care about anything that was happening, and only wanted to be near Wolf.

Fox turned from the Star Wolf team and looked at his own team. Krystal was humming quietly to herself, looking at all the displays, not understanding much of it, but looking at them anyway, if only to pass the time. Slippy worked with ROB at the controls to the dreadnaught, focusing completely on the multiple tasks he and the robot were attending. Falco maintained an air of aloofness, almost as if he were sleeping, but Fox knew that if an enemy fleet warped in, he would be strapped into his Arwing before anybody could even breathe.

Damon and his wife sat together, the smaller vixen's hand encased in her husband's, as if they were both statues. Hunter's head rested on his shoulder, her eyes closed, knowing her husband would protect her from anything. Fox smiled softly at the scene as his mind took over, the image forming in his head the exact same as what he was seeing, but showing himself and Krystal in their places instead. He suddenly remembered that Krystal could read his mind and desperately tried to think of something else.

He was still trying to make the image disappear when Krystal stopped humming. Fox noticed and turned to her, greeted by a soft smile on the sapphire vixen's face. She winked at him, then went back to humming like nothing had happened. The bridge continued to grow brighter as they dropped into the planet's atmosphere. Bastion, the

fortress planet. This would be their home for some time now.

"I don't care. Find the retreating fleets and destroy them, and whatever they're using as a base. Fail me again, Solaris, and you know the consequences." The figure hidden in shadow bowed hastily, trying to get out of there as fast as possible. "Yes, my lord." Solaris remained on his knees until this leader of his pointed on scaly claw and commanded, in a baritone that stopped Solaris' blood cold in his veins. "Go, and do not fail me again." Solaris nodded repeatedly. "Yes, sire, it will be done." The green dragon quickly fled, his steel armor clinking together as he hastily ran from the figure sitting on the makeshift throne in the remains of Corneria's capital building. He knew that if he failed again, it would be his last, and he didn't particularly enjoy what he had heard from others that had been in his shoes. The Serpents would do his job, and keep what he held dear to him.

Fox felt heavier as he stepped onto the bridge to the docking facility. He assumed the gravity was stronger here, but he decided to ignore it. He didn't ignore it for long however, his tail became harder to move, it was slightly more noticeable when he heard his boots clink against the metal gangway. The group that had been on the Great Fox followed him out, each of them looking at the new surroundings.

The naval base had been cleared out of a jungle, looking much like Fortuna had before the aparoids had taken over. The moist jungle floor, and it's towering acacia trees were abundant, dominating the landscape, and then civilization took over. The humid jungle was cut off, replaced by the black tarmac of the many runways, the white baseplate that housed the naval base's many components, ranging from the enlisted barracks all the way to the command and control center.

The group slowly made their way towards the control tower, where they were to be debriefed. Fox looked back once more at his ship, his home, and saw the tank they had rescued before rolling down a ramp out of the hangar. The commander they had picked up waving at them from the top of the gun.

He saw Damon in his peripherals, the senior officer looking at the commander as if he was a lifeline and the vulpine was lost in a hurricane. "Sir?" Fox asked, raising an eyebrow. Damon said nothing, almost as if he hadn't heard the junior officer. Fox continued to look at the Colonel. Damon watched the tank roll out of sight. "Mike Yankee Sierra Oscar November" The Colonel stared for a few more moments where the tank had been, the engine fading away.

Damon finally felt his wife's hand on his shoulder, the smaller vixen looking into her husband's eyes. Damon took his wife's hand, the couple making their way to the control tower. The rest of the group looked at each other. They didn't spend much time doing it, as they knew time was something they didn't have much of.

The air conditioned tower was a subtle change from the humid base grounds. Fox and Krystal looked around, then at each other, both of them trying to find where they were supposed to go. Krystal, however, spotted a flash of red in the sea of green, brown, and black camouflage.

General Pepper emerged from the ocean of uniforms and saluted, quickly dropping it and getting down to business. "Welcome to Bastion. This is our fortress planet, a fallback point, Corneria has been under attack too many times, and we knew that one day, not even the Star Fox team would be able to save it. Which is why we had the 'job boom' about ten years ago, if you remember. We needed workers to get these bases built."

Fox needed to ask a question, and apparently Pepper could tell. "Something wrong?" Fox nodded. "General, you said before that we were fighting an enemy with the forces of the rest of the galaxy? When did we meet alien species'? How did we get all these bases built?" Fox had a barrage of questions, but Pepper held up his hand, cutting the Colonel off. "The Lylat system is part of the Milky Way galaxy, as you already know. However, there was recently a war that raged for almost half a century. An entire race was almost wiped out, despite them having colonies across almost every arm of said galaxy. They were almost annihilated, and it shows. Almost every one of the colonies they had...have ceased to exist. Planets coated in jungles and rivers were turned into orbiting balls of pure glass."

The group looked at the General, all of them now interested in what he was saying, each of them eying him closely as he continued. "After many years of fighting, and their main military outpost being destroyed, and their homeworld being invaded twice, their enemy found an artifact on their planet. This artifact was a portal leading to a super weapon producer. The producer itself was a large space station, almost along the terms of an artificial planet. This construct was almost 20 times the size of Corneria. This race, called humans, followed the enemy to the construct through the portal. They didn't do it alone. The enemy had recently begun a schism, religious disputes and a rivalry between the two ruling military classes sparking the fuse for the schism, the ruling class siding with one, the other side taking the side of the humans. These separatists were one of the military rulers, called sangheili, or 'Elites'. The Elites helped the human forces invade the construct and push the loyalists back, spreading their forces thin as they fell back to the command room, where they would fire the super weapon."

Fox and the group continued to listen, each of them looking at the General's stony face as he explained what was happening, each of them seeing a towering green figure not too far away. "The super weapon producer was the command center for seven of the super weapons, each called 'halos'. The rings would have wiped out all sentient life in the galaxy with enough biomass to sustain a parasite that had been locked away by the ring's creators. The Humans and the Covenant, both loyalist and separatist, called this parasite 'The Flood', as they would reanimate the corpses of their enemies. The rings wouldn't kill the Flood, but they would starve them to death. The Humans and the Covenant Separatists invaded the control center where the Loyalist leader, a prophet by the name of 'Truth' was going to fire the rings and kill everything in the galaxy, believing it to be a way to achieve a 'great journey' of sorts. They needed a human to activate the rings, and they managed to capture a human marine. The human rank structure being similar to ours, he was the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps. One of the leading members of the Human's fight against the loyalists, and having survived the battles of Alpha Halo and Delta Halo. He was immune to the Flood, as a result of an earlier battle on one of the human colonies."

The green figure was moving towards the group, the figure silent and, as large as he was, made no sound, the heavy metal armor not even making the clinking noise on the floor, as most armored boots would. They couldn't see a face, as it was covered by a gold visor, unable to be seen through. "He was needed to activate the Ark, the producer that would activate the rings. The Humans and the separatists had two soldiers that were equal to that of what would be called 'one-man armies'. The humans had a naval enlisted man, a super soldier trained from the age of six along with multiple children, and then augmented with special enhancements. The humans called these 'Spartans', after super soldiers that had been born for war in the time of early civilizations. This super soldier was the last of his kind, an infallible soldier, his name being only 'Master Chief Petty Officer John-117'. The Separatists had their own, a soldier that had once been a fleet commander, one of the highest military ranks possible, but when the humans destroyed the first Halo, he was stripped of his rank and became the Arbiter. An Elite that would rush into battle for suicide missions, A field commander as much as an individual soldier on the front lines. Both of them assaulted the control room and allied with the Flood leader, 'The Gravemind'.

The figure stopped next to Pepper, not saying anything, letting the General continue. "They killed the prophet and the main loyalist forces. The Gravemind betrayed them, Sergeant Major Johnson managing to get a crashed 'Pelican' dropship that had come to rescue him, the only occupant being Commander Miranda Keyes, the daughter of the officer that helped destroy the first Halo, losing his life in the process. She had come to save Johnson, he had told her to kill him, and then herself, so the covenant could not use them to activate the weapon. She didn't get the chance, she was shot in the back before she could. Johnson was saved, but only after he had been forced to activate the weapon. The Arbiter and The Master Chief were too late, but managed to kill Truth. Johnson was able to get to the ship and pull out, the Spartan and Elite tried to get aboard, but were knocked off by the tentacles controlled by the Gravemind. They managed to fight their way out, and saw something that gave them an idea. They made their way out of the command center, and saw another Halo, a replacement for the one that had been destroyed. It was only partially complete, and a premature firing would destroy it and destabilize the Ark. The Human and Separatist forces were evacuated, the Arbiter, The Master Chief, and Sergeant major Johnson made their way onto this new Halo. The two fought their way through wave upon wave of Flood as Johnson piloted a human Destroyer to an area nearby to give them an escape option. The two got into the control center as the Master Chief and the Arbiter guarded the entrance to the firing center. The Master Chief had used an AI to help destroy the first Halo, and she had kept data on it, using it to fire this new one. Johnson took the AI and went to fire it, accompanied by the monitor of the installation, 343 Guilty Spark. As Johnson began to start the firing process, the monitor learned what was happening, and mortally wounded Johnson. Spartan 117 managed to destroy Spark, but Johnson wasn't going to make it out alive. He gave the Spartan his final orders and died in his arms."

The figure next to them tensed slightly, and the group could already tell that he was the Spartan. "The Spartan activated the ring and got out as quick as he possibly could, making his way towards the Destroyer. As he gunned his vehicle's throttle, he leaped into the hangar bay, flipping and flopping as the Arbiter was thrown from the gunner's seat. The Spartan put his AI into the tank there to start

the ship's engines as the Arbiter made his way to the cockpit. The portal was destabilizing as the Ark shook itself apart. The portal closed as the ship made it halfway through, severing the destroyer as the Arbiter went through and the Master Chief stayed. He was missing for 7 years, and has never spoken of what happened while he was missing. The humans and the remnants of the Covenant Separatists later formed the 'Halycon Treaty', the two of them becoming allies, and later, they found us and we formed an alliance. The ambassadors are the Commanders of each side, Spartan 117, and the Arbiter. We have their aid in taking back our planet, and our system. More of the story will be explained in detail at meetings. But now, I want you all to find your places and get settled in,, we have a lot of work to be done."

The group saluted, Pepper returning it. The General nodded to them and went on his way. The Spartan stayed where he was, motionless in the armor. "I take it you're Colonel McCloud?" He asked, his deep voice sounding filtered out through the Helmet's speakers. Fox nodded, feeling the tension of the rest of the group behind him. The armored figure snapped into one long straight rod, the position of attention being assumed within an instant, and a hand brought to his visor in a crisp salute. "Sir, Master Chief Petty Officer John-117, reporting for orders, sir." Fox hesitated, then saluted the Spartan, who remained that way, and probably would have forever had Fox not gave him the command of stand at ease. "Sir, I've been assigned to your group. They assigned Special forces teams of each force together with each other, and myself and the Arbiter have been assigned to your group." Fox nodded.

"Master Chief, if we're going to be working together, then we need to get to know each other. I'm sure you've settled in already?". "Yes sir, I'm in the SPECWAR area, literally next to your room, as well as the Arbiters. If you need help moving anything, I'm at your command.". Fox nodded at the figure. "Thank you, Master Chief.". The Spartan nodded, and Fox turned to his group. "All right, you heard the General, it's getting late and we need to get settled in...so hop to it!"

****Alright, making a crossover! I feel like adding in a few things, just to spice the story up a bit, and to give Corneria a fighting chance, cus we ALL know that Corneria's navy sucks if entire battlegroups are wiped out by what 4 interceptors can take on and not break a sweat. So, I started watching Major Payne right around the point of where they entered the building and saw Pepper. So, I popped out two pages in half an hour or so. Chicken and Mountain Dew go well with writing stories :3 So, if I'm ever going to have a problem with writing, and I feel as if I need to tell you guys, then I'll write up a review, so keep an eye on the reviews section for anything I need to tell you, alright? So thanks for reading this you guys, and I hope you all like the way I'm twisting it up. Until next time...HUZZAH! *flies away on a unicorn that smells like peanut butter****

12. Cortana

****Alright, starting chapter 12 the day after I upload chapter 11. I just turned this into a crossover, and I'm going to make it work! I hope you guys enjoy my story after this, and there are actually a few reasons as to why I did this. 1) So I can have somewhere to turn to while I'm fleshing part of it out, like leave off and go to the halo**

side while I think about the Star Fox side. 2) Corneria isn't going to be winning many space battles against this new enemy, so I picked something up that could even it out a bit. 3) There's definitely going to be land battles if they want to retake Corneria, and I know of only one soldier that can get it done. And lastly 4) If I write a sequel, this is going to give me a bit more leeway on it. So, now that I've gotten that out, on to the chapter!**

Krystal couldn't quite put it into words, but she felt ill at ease around this new figure. His intentions seemed good, and if he was the best soldier that their new allies had, then she expected that he would be good at heart too...but she couldn't read his mind. She didn't know what this soldier of legend was capable of, she didn't know what he was thinking, nor anything about the man behind the mask, and she didn't like this new feeling.

The vixen tried not to stare at him as she followed Fox down the corridors of the base, twists and turns as common as trees in a forest. She knew that eventually, she was going to get lost in a base of this size. She tried not to think too hard about, as she would probably get a map or something of that sort sooner or later.

As the group turned down a corridor entitled "SPECWAR GROUP 3", they saw each of their names on a door. Falco split off, then Wolf and his apparent girlfriend, then Leon, Panther, Slippy, Peppy, and finally only Krystal, John, and Fox were remaining. The Spartan unsealed his helmet, an audible hiss in the silent hall. The golden visor that had been hiding the Spartan's face was now out of the way, revealing him.

John had brown hair, looking extremely dark over his pale white skin. The paleness was a consequence of being in his armor for the majority of his life as a Spartan. Fox and Krystal were able to see pronounced freckles over the pale skin as well, but the most alarming thing about him was the liveliness in his eyes. They were brown, but held the shine of a blue eyed teenager. John was 55, but nobody could tell if they didn't know him well enough. He moved with the preciseness of an ice skater, every movement was delicate and easy, despite the half ton of armor encasing him.

The Master Chief held his helmet under his arm and nodded to the two foxes, turning towards a door with the words "JOHN-117 MCPO OF THE NAVY. UNSC" written on it in big bulky black letters. As the door slid open and permitted John inside, his form disappeared as it just as quickly and seamlessly closed behind him. Fox and Krystal looked at each other, each of them looking into each others eyes as if they were talking to each other through telepathy, and as far as anybody could tell, they may very well have been doing that.

As John heard the footsteps of the two walking away, their feet clanging against the metal hallway fading over time. John finally let his mental barrier down and looked on his desk. He saw a small chip, only a few inches in diameter. He picked up the small chip and turned it over in his hands carefully. The once bright blue sheen that was housed inside it was gone, and left only gray circuit boards for him to stare at. Cortana. She had descended into rampancy over the time they had been lost aboard the rear half of _f__**orward unto dawn**_ after the Ark had torn itself apart.

The UNSC's top scientists and bio engineers had said they were going

to try something, but said the process they were thinking about would either completely destroy her or it would fail and the new her would be horribly disfigured, just as well as the Spartans that had washed out after the augmentations all those years ago.

Cortana had been a fifth generation 'smart' AI, which had set her life to 7 years before she descended into a state called 'rampancy', a form of AI insanity. John hadn't been able to do anything to help her as they had been lost all those years. When the UNSC had formed the idea to try and take her coding and any programming she had to try and make a new human body from it, John had hesitated. He was told the risks and it brought back a flood of memories from the Spartan program, how some had died, how some were permanently crippled. His friends, people he had grown up with, were either in states of uncontrollable shaking all the way to their bones being too disfigured, taking even their human semblance and leaving them to float in neutral buoyancy gel tanks, supported by respirators.

He pushed the image away from his mind and went back to thinking about Cortana. They doctors had been working in cold labs to put together everything they would need, and the procedure would be ready in only a few days time. John couldn't get his mind off of it, and he knew it would stress him out, so he tried not to think about it.

The super soldier sighed and stood, easing his helmet back onto his head and sealing it. He started to put the chip back on the dresser, but stopped. Instead, he slipped it into the slot at the base of his skull, the familiar feeling of it being there, but the icy cold sensation of water pouring into his mind wasn't there as it always was when Cortana had been in it. The feeling did nothing to ease the war hero's pain.

John couldn't stop thinking about it as he pushed his way back out the door, accidentally bumping into a human female. "Excuse me, I'm so..." John had begun to apologize to the woman, but stopped as he got a good look at her. The woman's hair was gray, well on it's way to becoming white like the labcoat he had seen her in when he was growing up. The corners of her eyes and mouth were pronounced in wrinkles, due to being quite old. John could recognize her anywhere. "Dr Halsey" John said, trying to hide his happiness at seeing her, trying to remain the emotionless figure he had always been for years.

"John, you're not fooling me" the doctor said, a smile creeping across her face. "I can tell your emotions just from the way your posture is, and you know that all too well...plus, my readings indicate an increase in heart rate." She sid with an increase in her smiles size. She tapped the corner of her glasses and medical charts popped up on them. John visibly flinched. Could she always do that? He didn't know, but he was indeed happy to see her.

John removed his helmet yet again, his face rock hard and emotionless. However, after she put her hands on her hips, John smiled softly and hugged Halsey, the woman that had been a sort of 'mother to him for many years. The small doctor wrapped her arms around the Spartan. It had been years since she had last seen him. "John? I think I may have something you want to see." The Chief tilted his head, wondering what she meant.

Halsey's fatigue began to show now, and it was apparent she had been

working almost nonstop on something recently. "Come with me". Catherine turned on her heel and strode down the hall, John following after her like a puppy that had gotten lost and then found it's owner. She started leading him further into the base, and it seemed like it was taking forever to get there. After a while, she stopped and turned to him. "John...Do you miss Cortana?" He nodded, reaching up and pulling the chip she had once been housed in out of the slot in his neck.

The doctor gauged his reaction in that he continued to keep the chip in his neck, even without her there. She studied it for a moment then opened the door in front of her, motioning for him to stay for a moment. Inside he could hear faint voices, having trouble even with his highly advanced hearing augmentations. After a few minutes, Dr Halsey returned, smiling softly. "Go inside..." she said, patting him on the back and literally trying to push him in.

As the door opened and he entered, he saw a bed, literally hundreds of monitors and readouts, and one person laying on the bed. He turned back to Halsey, but the door had closed. John was puzzled as to what was happening. The bed was the only thing in the room besides the monitors and equipment, so he moved towards it.

On the bed was a woman with dark hair and peach colored skin. It was all he could tell, as her eyes were closed and she didn't say anything. John looked back at the door that had sealed behind him, as if Dr Halsey would come explain, but she didn't, leaving John to go closer to the bed.

As he neared it, the woman's eyes opened, revealing a piercing blue gaze. She tilted her head to the Spartan. "hedblo juh". The woman struggled to form a greeting, and John was able to recognize his name in the statement. "Hello?" He moved ever closer and stood beside the bed. "Cuhtna." She said, her hands moving clumsily towards him. "Is something wrong?" He asked, taking the hand that was reaching for him, the shaking ceasing as his hand encased hers. "Cuhtna, Cuhtna!" She repeated. "are you trying to tell me your name?" He asked. The woman shook her head, expending a great amount of effort. "Cuh...tana...Cortuna...Cortana!" She said, sounding out her words.

John stiffened, his heart rising as he realized who it was. Cortana had been given a new body, and now she was learning to speak with this new body. "Juhn...Jon...John!" She said his name clearly, smiling at her new abilities. The Master Chief could only smile at her. "Yes, how are you feeling Cortana?" She smiled wider, squeezing his hand. "g...good" Her response got a smile to crack the rocky features of the soldier's face. Cortana reached up with her free hand and rubbed it against his face, gasping as she felt the sensation of touch with the hand.

John could only laugh at her alarmed reaction. "Irony, isn't it? That the most advanced AI in human history, and also the only AI to be stuck with the worst parasite in the galaxy for months, but she gets alarmed at the feeling of a face and stumbles with talking" He joked with her, eliciting a sort of haughty response from the woman.

The Spartan smiled at her, Cortana was still amused with the feelings she was getting. She couldn't exactly smell much other than the

disinfectant, and apparently, she didn't like it, as her nose occasionally wrinkled up. Cortana yawned and her hand slowly pulled from John's. He wanted to hold on to it, but he decided not to, so she could sleep.

He watched her for a few moments as she fell into a deep sleep, and turned and walked out of the room, returning to his own. He thought to himself as he made his way back. Hmm...I thought Cortana wasn't going to be ready for another few days...but she's already getting used to it? He didn't have much time to think, and was quickly standing in front of his door, thumbing the open command on the pad.

As the Chief began disengaging his armor, he continued to think on Cortana. She looked almost the exact same as her holographic form, but now she was flesh and blood, just like him. He dwelled a bit more on the subject as he eventually eased into a shallow slumber.

Fox knocked on the door to Krystal's room. It had been three weeks since they had arrived on the planet, and the two had grown closer in the time. However, tonight would be the first date that wouldn't end horribly...or at least, the vulpine hoped it wouldn't. Krystal opened the door a few moments later, already changed from her flight suit to a much more comfortable white T-shirt with the Star Fox symbol and a pair of jeans. Fox smiled as he looked at the attire, which was almost an opposite to his black shirt with the Cornerian Military insignia on it, and a pair of black jeans to go with it.

Krystal smiled at him as well, narrowing her eyes and scrutinizing his attire. "I thought we were going dressy casual, not dressy formal" She joked, eliciting a small laugh from the vulpine. "We are, I dress to impress however" Krystal raised an eyebrow. "Oh really now?"

Fox smirked "Indeed, is the lady ready for a night out on the town...er...base?" Krystal smiled softly at his correction. "Yes, the lady is ready for her date, the one with the carriage and the muscles." She continued to joke with the vulpine. "You mean the guy I passed on the way here? Nah, he sent me instead." He smirked at her yet again, Krystal's heart fluttering a bit as she grew used to the sight of his trademark cocky smirk. "Then I guess you'll have to do, Fox." She winked at him as he held his arm out, allowing her to take it as he lead her to the base cafeteria.

The two came upon a fork in the corridors, forcing Fox to try and remember the direction he needed to go as he heard something clanging against the metal flooring of the hall. The 7'2 Spartan slowly making his way down the corridor with a woman shakily gripping his arm, struggling to make her way along. She started to fall, but John caught her.

As the pair neared the two foxes, John noticed the Colonel and newly promoted Major. "Sir! Ma'am!" He slowly brought his right arm to a salute, making sure he didn't throw the woman off balance. Fox and Krystal saluted, letting the Spartan drop his arm and return to helping the woman down the corridor. "Master Chief?" Fox asked. "Do you need any help?" John smiled at the Colonel. "No, I was making my way to the mess hall, but thank you." The woman gave a shaky smile to the two, still giving John's arm a death grip.

"Is something wrong?" Krystal asked the woman. She shook her head, still smiling. John took this time to introduce her. "Colonel Mccloud, Major...Ma'am, what should I call you? I never learned your last name." Krystal waved her hand in a lazy manner. "Please, just call me Krystal." John nodded, returning to what he had been saying. "This is Cortana, she was the AI that joined me through the last few years of the Great War and the years we were lost afterward. She was given a human body, as smart AI's eventually gain too much knowledge and go insane due to it. They made her new body from scratch, transplanting her onto it. She's still learning to walk, talk, and do pretty much everything a normal human or Lylatian does at an early stage in life...that is, if Humans and Lyltians are the same.

Fox and Krystal nodded and smiled at the pair. "We were going there too, mind if we join you?"

John shook his head. "I don't mind at all." The two grinned and joined the Chief and Cortana, beginning their journey to the mess hall for what had been established as "Date Night"

****Alright, another chapter getting rolled off the conveyor that is my mind. It took me awhile to think this out, so now, I just wait for reviews from my regulars (You guys know who you are :3) So, I hope you guys enjoyed this chapter! And sorry for the long delay, I'll try to get ****another**** chapter out quicker next time. So, until the next chapter, BAI!****

13. Target: Venom

**** Starting up another chapter now, and I'm pretty sure that any Halo fans that enjoy John x Cortana are a bit more into the story now. I'm glad you guy like this story, and I'll keep it going as long as I have a few ideas, maybe even a sequel if I can. I'm gonna start a new "Military Calender" type thing, sort of like whats found in the Halo books, if only to help with distinguishing the time and location. So, for lack of anything else to say, on to the chapter!****

****In high orbit around planet Corneria on the****

****Destroyer _Orpheon_, 2nd Cycle of ****

****occupation, Serpentis Battle Calender, ****

Solomon strode through the tight confines of the _Orpheon_, his claws making metallic clicking sounds as each footfall occurred. The Serpentis Major's mere presence parted a sea through the mass of lower ranking Serpentis, each of them catching sight of the glistening green armor and fleeing almost immediately.

The Major smirked behind his vacuum sealed helmet. Major Solomon Serant came from a long line of Serpentis military leaders. He had spent years planning, and today would be the day: He was going to overthrow Ulora Serant, his uncle. Ulora had killed Solomon's father years before, taking lead over the house of Serant. Now, Solomon had a strong following in the Serpentis military, both as a ruthless field commander and a master politician.

The doors to the bridge opened, revealing a single throne. Ulora sat just on the other side of the steel chair. Solomon unsheathed his

energy blade, the steel cutlass slowly changing colors to a bright purple hue, the hot plasma making the already deadly blade even more of a force to be reckoned with in the hands of one of the deadliest swordsmen the serpentis military had ever seen.

The bridge was quiet as the windows overlooking the blue planet let any observer see the planet for its beauty as the fires had settled down. The only sounds were the low rumble of the ship's engines, almost a kilometer away at the rear of the ligate class destroyer, the sound's of both Serpentis officer's sets of four hearts each beating softly in anticipation, and the almost unheard whisper of Ulora's energy blade igniting.

"So" the deep rumble of the Serant House leader's voice boomed in the silent skirmish. "You have finally come to redeem your honor, the honor your father could not keep." Solomon's grip on the energy cutlass tightened noticeably. "Yes, and I've come to slay you just as well. You have no right to lead the house of Serant. You fled almost every battle you participated in, you took on my father while surrounded by your own bodyguards, outnumbering him 12 to 1. You will fall..." He paused to gather emphasis. _"Today" _

Ulora stood, turning and moving toward the Major, his blade dragging a ragged tear in the deck plating, his lips forming into a smile. Solomon reached to the back of his helmet and unsealed it, the hissing only antagonizing Ulora with Solomon's quiet confidence. "You will lose, Ulora. You have no skill with the blade you carry, and your ego will be your undoing."

Ulora only smirked, his scaly lips pursing together into a tight line. "Redeem your father's honor by besting me in a duel...if you win by killing me, then the throne is yours, if I win...then it will only mean you have about as much honor as your father...none" His smile widened into an ear to ear grin, igniting Solomon's rage as he leapt towards his uncle, sword in a striking position.

It caught Ulora off guard, barely giving him a chance to parry the blow. The room flashed as the two swords clashed together, Ulora struggling to keep up with Solomon's strikes, managing to see the rage in his nephew's eyes, striking fear into his own. The battle lasted only seconds as Solomon quickly disarmed his uncle.

The Major put the blade to Ulora's neck, the heat blistering the scaly skin on his neck. Ulora closed his eyes, waiting for death, but the heat faded. When he opened his dark eyes, Solomon had turned away from him, his sword whispering as it was sheathed. "I'm not going to kill you. I feel it would be better to leave you alive, to live with your dishonor. Security forces are on their way to remove and imprison you." Ulora stood and stared after him. "Kill me! Kill me now!" He shouted at his nephew, but his cries fell on deaf ears.

Within moments, Serpentis military police stormed into the bridge, gathering the disgraced leader and removing him, his shouts of anger fading quickly as the bulkhead closed. Solomon smiled softly to himself as he placed his helmet back onto his head, taking his place in the ship master's chair, calling the bridge crew to man their stations.

****Below the surface of Bastion, Helmarock Naval Base****

****interior command room, 0700 Hours, UNSC/****

****Cornerian Military Calender.****

Fox sat with his arms crossed next to Damon, Krystal, The Master Chief, and the rest of the Base's high priority personnel. Fox couldn't help but feel ill at ease around the others, this new threat was looming, even going so far as to completely destroy any planets they weren't using. Rumor had it that they had already obliterated Macbeth, hit it with so much orbital bombardment that it drove the planet into a nuclear winter, then the hollow core collapsed on itself, crushing itself into a ball no bigger than any asteroid in Meteo, Lylat's asteroid field that revolved between Corneria and the rest of the system.

Fox stared at the tactical display, noticing how normal the planets aligned in green, indicating an allied planet...were almost all a dark red, under enemy control. General Pepper stood at the head of the room, along with a Cornerian Admiral and the Human commander, another Admiral. The Cornerian Admiral was a gray wold, getting on in his years. Although the Admiral's fur had long ago lost it's shiny luster, the medals, ribbons, and nameplate, reading 'Lanner', shined like the sun against a mirror on a hot, cloudless day.

The human Admiral, going by the name and rank of Fleet Admiral Terrance Hood, studied the display, as if he knew exactly what to do. The room was silent as the Commanders looked over every bit of the map, as if each pixel was a possible enemy unit.

The silence was shattered as the door behind the group split, an Elite " The shortened name given to the Sangheilli " entered. Admiral Hood turned to him. "It's nice of you to join us Shipmaster, we were about to get this meeting underway." The Elite nodded, his mandibles clicking together almost soundlessly. His white armor reflected the light of the display as he took a seat next to the arbiter, his two remaining mandibles still twitching. He had lost the two that had been on the left from an attack by the flood, leaving him with a permanent reminder of how dangerous an enemy could be if underestimated.

The Admirals and General looked at each other, then at the crowd. "There's going to be an invasion, we're taking back Venom, and we will use it as a foothold in our struggle for Lylat. There is a fleet mustering, composed of Lylatian, Sangheilli, and UNSC ships as we speak. The Elites will be sending their Assault Carrier, _Shadow of Intent,_ and the 2nd fleet of homogenous clarity, composed of mainly Heavy Cruisers. The UNSC will be sending numerous battleships, and two heavy troop transports, full of the best soldiers they have. These soldiers are ODS'T's, dropped from orbit around a planet. They're the closest thing to a Spartan that we have, besides the Master Chief himself. And we will send Frigates, Destroyers, and Light Cruisers."

Lord Hood continued where General Pepper had left off. "The UNSC will provide ground troops in the form of ODS'T's and conventional marines. The Elites will provide even more, in the form of Elite commandos, almost similar to the ODS'T's, yet bigger, stronger, and faster. Lylatians will provide orbital bombardment support along with the rest of the fleet, and their main units will be the Star Fox team and

Colonel Ballard's specialized fighter " bomber wing. Each unit will be given a briefing as soon as we conclude this by their commanders. Our estimated forces for Land will be at Theater strength, consisting of one Army from both the UNSC and Elites, The UNSC and Lylatians will provide air support consisting of two UNSC Shortsword and Longsword air wings, and the Star Fox team and fighter bomber wing. The Elites will handle suborbital glassing support as a last resort, and they will be deploying multiple mechanized battalions as well."

The white Elite that had entered earlier stood and moved to the front of the room. "The _Shadow of Intent _will carry all air units, and whatever does not fit, will be spread out across the 2nd fleet of homogenous clarity." He turned to the other leaders. "I will muster my forces, my preparations will be ready within seven cycles." He put one fist to his chest, then put it back down. The Elite equivalent of "until we meet again". As the Shipmaster left the room, the Arbiter stood and nodded at the others, then followed suit.

It had been only a week since the plans had been drawn up, and everybody was preparing for the big battle that would be the first push at retaking the Lylat system. Fox turned to go find his squadron and tell them what he had learned just before the meeting had begun. He turned to face Krystal, the blue vixen smiling at him as she took his hand.

Fox blushed at the sudden contact, trying to stammer something out. She didn't let him get far with it, quickly putting a finger to his mouth to shut him up. "Fox, the General said we could have a few hours to ourselves" She said, smiling softly, a twinkle in her eyes.

Fox's tail lowered slowly as he relaxed, understanding what she meant. He had promised her a small romantic outing before they embarked on their first mission. The vulpine took her hand and led her out of the room, the conversations inside being muted as the doors slid closed behind them, leaving the two Lylatians to walk in silence.

The vulpine broke the ice as they emerged at the surface a few minutes later. It was dark and the stars stood out. Bright against the small glimmers of the fleet engines in the void. He squeezed Krystal's hand softly and turned to her, smiling. The vixen returned the gesture as they slowly came together, putting their foreheads against the others.

Fox saw a flash out of the corner of his eye, a shooting star. He knew it wouldn't last long, and quickly got Krystal's attention. "Look, a shooting star, Make a wish, Krystal." The vixen only grinned and stood in front of him, allowing the two of them to face the falling meteor, taking it upon herself to wrap his arms around her waist as she closed her eyes and made a wish.

****Alright, short chapter. Sorry it took so long, a lot of stuff has been going on for me lately. I got Ace Combat Assault Horizon, My first kiss, started working on a Facebook page for the story, the link in the reviews. I saw a review talking about how it's too heavily based on Star Fox. Of course it is! I only added Halo as an attempt at lengthening the story and making any sequels longer too. Anyway, I hope you guys enjoyed this chapter, and heres the link**

again, so until next time!**

** .com/pages/Star-Fox-Alpha-and-Omega/203936126344613?sk=wall
**

14. Foothold in Lylat

** Alright, starting up a new chapter now. I enjoy getting you guys' reviews on this story. To answer a question posed by one of you, a good review does motivate a writer to continue his story. Why? Because it makes him want to shell out another chapter to get the praising review. If he/she gets a large review with praise in it, it makes him/her feel good about the story, and they'll want to continue it. So, I brought in another major character that will hold the camera for the bad guys, John and Cortana are starting their own romance, and Fox and Krystal are getting a bit closer. I feel that romance isn't really my subject however. Anyway, enough of my rambling, on to the story! **

Fox was in the air over Corneria, staring at the falling slag heap of what used to be his Arwing as he parachuted away from a close call, and he could hear his own voice. "I've seen my death in my dreams...many times." He saw fighters swarming everywhere, a mix of Elite Seraph fighters, Cornerian MK II Delta's, UNSC Longsword heavy Interceptors, and the new enemy ships: Dracos. The Draco ships were heavy threats when faced in swarms. Their cannons could recycle faster than either Lylatian or Sangheilli fighters could, getting more shots in.

He noticed one was coming right at him, but it was on fire. The flaming hulk of scrap metal hurtled past him, the heat making blisters form on his skin, even through his flight suit. He watched the Longsword that had taken it out swoop around, choosing another target. His blood ran cold only moments later. A ship with a crescent on each wing shattered the sound barrier as it passed by only a few feet from the ejected Colonel. The passing made Fox's chute flap dangerously, almost losing it's air and causing him to fall to his death. The ship turned and fired a few shots, taking out one of the Longswords and coming back at him. Fox's eyes widened as the ship headed straight for him. He put his hand up to block it right as the fighter's nose plowed into him.

Fox whited out the moment the ship hit, and saw a fan spinning lazily in the ceiling. He could see it through the crevices of his hand, where his fingers were outstretched, as if to try and fend off the nightmare fighter. He looked around, seeing the inside of his quarters. He held his head in his hands, trying to clear it. Three sharp raps came on the door as Krystal's voice softly penetrated the bulkhead. "Fox? Are you awake? We need to get ready. The assault begins in an hour." Fox looked at the door, still trying to clear his head. "Yeah, coming..."

He stood and looked out the window, but couldn't see anything. There was nothing to look at in the alternate dimensions of slipspace.. It had been 2 weeks since the briefing about the mission had been given, and a fleet had been assembled to try and take back Lylat. The Colonel took a few deep breaths to try and calm himself as he put on his flight suit, strapping a blaster to his leg. The door opened in front of him when he came closer, stepping out into the

hallway.

"Hey, Colonel!" Fox turned as he heard a feminine voice. It was Captain Gutierrez, one of the members assigned to the merged Star Fox and Star Wolf squadrons that had then merged with the fighter wing commanded by Damon. She was a dark black cat, about a foot shorter than Fox. Her eyes were a piercing yellow, and she walked with the slow gait of somebody that had spent a lot of time in space.

"Are you alright? You look like you've seen a ghost." Fox shook his head. "No, it was just a nightmare." The feline thought for a moment then shrugged, as if she had wanted to pry a bit further, to see if she could help. She apparently decided not to, as they closed in on the hangar bay, the door sliding open and revealing a bustling bay full of ships from each force that was taking part in the assault. Fighters, bombers, helicopters, and multirole fighters.

Fox saw each squadron area, and eventually found his and the young captain's. When he arrived, he saw the members of Star Fox, Star Wolf, and Damon's Wings of Ragnarok squadron, all formed into the multirole wing of the attack force. Fox looked round at the members of his wing, as he would be taking co command of it, with Damon taking main command.

They had been stationed aboard the Sangheilli Super Carrier _Frozen Ignition._ Over half of the assault forces air units were stationed on the super carrier, a ship that was almost 30 kilometers long, 11 kilometers wide, and held hundreds, if not thousands, of ships in it's cavernous hangar bays, as well as a portion of the forward assault forces that would be deployed to the surface of Venom upon taking hold of air superiority.

Fox separated from the Captain to check his Arwing. It had been modified with Elite shield technology to improve survivability in a furball. The lasers had been supercharged by the engineers on the ship, creatures that could take apart and fix almost anything they got their tentacles on. Fox nodded in approval as he looked over the engines, which had been overhauled to give out over three times the original output.

All of the Arwings, and the Star Wolf teams Wolfens, had been overhauled in the same way, making the strike force that held the two teams the deadliest things in the air. Colonel Damon's flight had been composed of the best pilots in the Cornerian Air Force as well, also getting improved ships.

Fox heard footsteps, boots clinking on metal, and turned to see each member of the wing standing there, waiting for orders as Damon appeared at his side. Fox looked at the older officer, eliciting a small smile of confidence from the old man. Fox returned the smile and returned his gaze to the strike force in front of him and began reciting the plan to them as the ship began to decelerate, dropping out of slipspace and sounding warning alarms throughout the ship. The war for Lylat was about to begin

****In orbit around Corneria, aboard Serpents Carrier _Dread's footfall, _1st Fleet of Hollow Vengeance****

"Commander, reading warp signatures on the outer reaches of the system!" Solomon put his claws together, smiling behind his new

command chair. So, the Cornerians had come to retake the system. As long as the recently promoted fleet commander was breathing, the system would remain his. He turned the command chair away from the bridge and stood, making his way to the sensor station commanded by Major Oslo Norales, a veteran of many naval engagements during the Serpentis civil war over 200 years before. The Serpentis lived to be over 500 years old, and both Solomon and Oslo were into their 320's. The Major's left eye was blind, a result of shrapnel from an explosion on one of his ships during an engagement when he had still been relatively inexperienced. He had refused to get it repaired.

The sensor screen continued to show hundreds of dots appearing near Venom. The Cornerian fleet was dropping into normal space just under 500,000 kilometers from the planet, and were most likely preparing for their assault on the system. The Fleet leader smiled to himself as he returned to his command chair and settled in. This was going to be a short war.

Krystal stood, watching as her commander finished his plan. They were to drop into Venom's atmosphere and shoot anything that wasn't an ally. The orders were simple and blunt, and Krystal was ready. The vixen felt a hand on her shoulder. She turned and saw the black fox that was going to be the commander for the other half of the force, Damon. "Krystal." His voice was gruff as he looked at her, and as she looked into his eyes, she could sense that something was stressing him out. She began probing his mind, but couldn't find anything. The man was an expert at hiding his thoughts.

He started to motion for her to follow him. He nodded at Fox, who nodded back at him. As the blue vixen followed the much larger black vulpine, she got that same odd feeling of a memory that she had gotten at the ball when Corneria was attacked. The vulpine led her to a secure conference room. There was only one other person there. It was Damon's wife. The other vixen smiled at the younger pilot. Damon looked at his wife and left Krystal's side. The two looked at each other nervously and then back at Krystal. "You've grown into a fine young woman since Cerinia was destroyed Krystal." The vixen looked at the two of them. "What? I don't understand what you mean." Krystal's mind was flooded with confusion and questions as the question was asked. Damon sighed softly, a smile tugging at the corners of the veteran's mouth.

Damon's wife spoke of what her husband was about to say. "Krystal...your parents aren't dead..." the old vixen smiled at her as she finished her statement. "They're right in front of you" Krystal looked at them "My parents were killed when the planet was destroyed though!" Damon shook his head. "We left you in the care of your aunt and uncle, so we could try to find a better place tht would make living easier for you. Cerinia's resources were running low and we knew it would get chaotic if we were still there when everything collapsed. The planet was destroyed and we thought you had still been there when it happened. We were grief stricken when we learned about it."

Krystal's mouth hung open as she tried to process it all. Damon and his wife " Krystal's real parents " stepped forward with their arms open as Krystal flung herself into their embrace, tears streaming from her eyes as she was finally reunited with her parents.

The moment didn't last long, however, as the alarms began to sound again. The intercom blared out orders as they were given orders to launch fighters. Father and daughter looked at each other, nodded, and ran out of the room to get to their fighters. Fox and Falco were waiting for them as the two entered. "Where have the two of you been?" They asked. They didn't decide to wait, as Fox shook his head. "Never mind that, just get into your ships, we have to launch!"

The four pilots each got into their ships and blasted out of the bay, joining hundreds of others in a mass formation of fireballs streaking through the acrid green clouds of Venom's atmosphere. The wing dropped out of the clouds after a few minutes of freefall. Fox and Krystal formed into a two fighter formation, both flying at the head of the force.

They saw dots in the distance, tons of them. As the dots closed together, features formed onto the dots. Krystal saw laser cannons, wings, engines, and cockpits form onto the steel lumps. She looked over at Fox, who flashed her a grin and gunned his engines. Krystal grinned as well, and the two dove headfirst into the enemy formation, guns blazing.

The sky darkened before they got there, and a voice coming over the comm channel as a UNSC frigate dove out of the clouds upside down, the auto-cannons bristling on the ship opening fire and peppering the enemy ships with thousands of bullets, tearing through their hull, ripping their pilots apart, and obliterating their fusion reactors, causing miniature suns to flare up everywhere. "_This is UNSC Frigate _Grafton_, providing close support to help you guys out a bit before the fur starts flying. Good luck down their boys, you've got a long day today. We'll let you finish up here, we'll be in orbit ready to provide more support if you need it, so just call and we'll come a runnin'. Grafton Actual out."_

Fox and the rest of the pilot's grins grew larger as they knew how heavy the odds were in their favor. The Cornerian, Human, and Elite ships screamed through the sky, the sound of their engines and lasers firing almost sounding like a mass scream for the enemy's blood, all of them wanting the first kill.

The ships dipped and dove through the hail of return fire, dodging with ease. The Serpentis ships were heavily outnumbered, with lasers, bullets, and superheated plasma storming through the air and impacting all over the enemy ships. One enemy was hit by laser fire and exploded, while another took plasma hits in the cockpit, the steel melting in on itself and killing the pilot by crushing him with melting steel. Debris went everywhere as bullets tore open the Serpentis ships.

A Longsword formed along Fox's wing and unleashed a hail of 50mm rounds from it's guns, tearing apart a ship that Fox had his sights on. Fox raised an eyebrow as he realized tht they were actually keeping score from listening to the comm chatter from the Longsword. "_Come on, Colonel, you can't be letting people take your kills!" _The channel got a wave off laughing from the flight as Fox let off a cocky grin, returning to the old him from when he was younger, and fighting in the Lylat Wars. "You're on!" The vulpine smirked as he took the Longsword's kill next. The two ships formed together and competed for kills the rest of the battle.

After about an hour, the enemy ships became less and less organized, the invading force beginning to get easier kills as the ships also lessened in number. This was a mop up job now. Fox sent orders to return to the Carrier as he broke away, leaving anybody that wanted to continue shooting the enemy down to do as they pleased. The members of Star Fox and Star Wolf formed together with Colonel Ballard in the flight as well, all of them returning to the dark void of space and heading for the _Frozen Ignition._

As the ships landed, Each pilot got out and grinned at each other. Fox started walking towards Krystal, the vixen smiling at him from next to her Arwing. "Good job today Krystal." The vixen grinned wider. "You're not so bad yourself." she teased. Krystal reached out and took his hand, her tail flicking around and wrapping around his. Fox blushed slightly, eliciting a small giggle from Krystal. The vixen winked at him as Damon watched from his fighter, smiling softly to himself as he saw his daughter with Fox. "You've got her heart Fox, now make sure it stays with yours" The Omega Colonel said softly to himself.

The Colonel continued to watch as the day wound down. Venom had been captured, and the Halycon forces had a foothold for the war. They wouldn't take long at this rate, and everybody knew it. Morale was already sky high from this victory.

Fox and Krystal smiled softly as they looked out of the hangar bay in towards the system's sun, seeing Titania in the distance and smiling at each other as they closed in for a kiss, their lips meeting and eliciting a cheer from the rest of the pilots in the bay.

The second Lylat Wars had begun.

****HUZZAH!** The Halycon forces (The name given to the good guys) have gotten a foothold to retake the system. Krystal learned who her parents really were, Fox got a victory kiss, Damon is watching a guy make a move on his daughter, and what is Solomon planning? WHO KNOWS! ONLY ME!...well, not really, at least, not yet. The fanart that Jeremy Softpaus has been drawing has been completed, and it was last night that I got it. It turned out pretty awesome. Now, I wait, then think, then wait some more, then type a bit, then think some more, then get some chicken, then...THE CYCLE GOES ON! Anyway, I hope you guys enjoyed this chapter, until next time!**

**** -Great Fox MK3****

15. Hell's waiting room

****TRICK OR TREATING I GOT SOME CANDEH AND SOME STUFFS AND SOME POPCORN AND A CAT FOLLOWED ME FOR A FEW NEIGHBORHOODS AND- *stops, out of breath*** Anyway, besides the candy that I barely got, Halloween was alright,sucked getting all the friggin paint off my face -_- But, onto matters pertaining to the story. For Criticalkill's question, I really don't mind what anybody thinks about my story. If they like my story, then that's great! But if they don't then oh well. Everyone is entitled to an opinion, and far be it from me to tell them otherwise. The reason why I don't mind is because I've already got a dedicated fanbase in you, Jeremy Softpaus, Hopeless-Tyronos, Artyom Carter, and all the anonymous reviewers. So, I'd like to say thank you to the

people that read and enjoy it. Now, enough of my rambling, on to the story!**

Spartan 117 quarters, on CSO class SuperCarrier **_Frozen Ignition**_

Assault on Venom commenced.

Mission timer (Master Chief Petty Officer John-117) +5:00 Minutes

The Chief had made sure all his weapons were ready for the mission, grabbing a double handful of clips for his MA5B Assault Rifle. The Spartan took the rifle apart, inspected it, and reassembled it, pleased. He would soon be getting into a pod with an entire regiment of Orbital Drop Shock Troopers, "Helljumpers", and a few strike teams of Elites. He heard the alarm blare, calling the invasion forces to ready themselves.

The Chief grit his teeth, knowing he didn't have long. The regiment and strike teams would load into pods that would be dropped from orbit directly into Venom's atmosphere. The UNSC had developed pods to insert the elite Helljumpers behind enemy lines. The pods had been designed to replace Lifeboats as a spearhead. The Lifeboats were slow and bulky, and easy targets for AA fire. The pods, however, were small and maneuverable. A few were sure to be nailed by any flak, but the single resulting death was better than a dozen.

He heard a soft knock on the door to his quarters, and when he turned, he saw the metal slowly sliding open, revealing Cortana. She had grown used to her new body fairly quickly. He removed his helmet as she stepped closer, looking into the man's eyes. "John...I won't be able to join you anymore on the battlefield..." She frowned softly, her discomfort showing. The Spartan and former AI had spent years together in John's armor, Cortana providing targets and John hosing them with weapons fire.

The Spartan reached down and took one of her small hands in his own large, pale hands, lifting her chin with his other index finger to look her in the eye. "I'll be alright Cortana, trust me." The woman smiled at her friend. "I know John, your luck is still there." The woman's smile and quote caused a twitch at the corner of John's mouth, a smile was growing.

The woman dropped his hand and hugged him, putting her arms around his neck. John reacted to the affection by wrapping his own steel arms, arms that had killed thousands, around her waist and cradling her as if she was as frail as a child, and she was in John's arms. Cortana pulled her head away from his shoulder, staring into his eyes for a few moments, then closed her eyes and leaned forward, slowly sealing her lips against the soldier's own.

John was shocked t her action, but slowly relaxed, closing his own eyes and enjoying the moment. It was only a split second, but it seemed like forever to the two of them when the alarm sounded again calling the invasion forces to muster. John started to pull away, but Cortana kept the kiss for a few more seconds, reaching around him and grabbing his helmet, putting it on him as she finally slipped away, a soft pink tint in her cheeks.

The Spartan smiled under the polarized visor and grabbed his weapons, consisting of an MA5B, two SMG's, and a quartet of both frag grenades and the Elite plasma grenades that would stick to a target like glue upon hitting. Cortana continued to smile at John as he turned to her. "I'll be back soon, Cortana, so keep those lips warm for me." The gold visor depolarized, revealing John's smiling face as Cortana's pink cheeks turned a dark red shade.

She nodded, smiling as he ran out of the room, sprinting down the hallway and into a hangar bay. The sounds of fighters launching out of the bay was a scream of activity. The Chief could see the ships of Colonel Mccloud's assault wing launch, the ships screeching out of the bay and inverting, rocketing towards the arid green clouds of Venom.

John turned to his right and spotted a tube leading into another ship, a UNSC Carrier. The Hell's Lifeboat, had been converted to have thousands of drop pods on the bottom of the ship, the regiment of ODST's, Elite strike teams, and lone Spartan were to drop into the planet from there. The Chief quickly ran to the tube and passed between the ships through it, quickly getting to an area and waiting for the commander to initiate the launch sequence.

Colonel Ortega stood in front of his regiment, giving the time honored speech that ODST's loved to hear. It was mainly for morale. "Alright, see that planet down there? Lord Hood wants it, and we are going to get it. When we get into these pods, we'll get the one thing marines love like beer: dirt beneath our feet. The fly boys and your fellow jar heads will be riding down in assault boats, in air conditioning while sipping wine and nibbling on appetizers.

We, however, will be dropping in...and do any of you know how!" The Colonel paused, waiting for the answer he loved to hear as the regiment yelled in unison. "WE GO FEET FIRST, SIR!" The Colonel nodded in approval. "Damn right you will. Now, you have five minutes to strap in, buckle up, and shove a cork in your' asses."

The ODST's all laughed. It was a joke that they loved to hear in every drop. They didn't have time to think over it though, and quickly began to rush into their pods. The Master Chief sprinted after Colonel Ortega, getting into the pod next to him. As the pods closed, the Master Chief saw the launch timer hit 0:00 the moment his boots braced against the ground.

The pods dropped out of the ship's belly, screaming into the void of space. Ortega's face showed up on one of the screens in John's pod. "Listen up, Marines, We have a Spartan with us today, and I'll be damned if we let him show us up! So get out there, pick your targets, and take them from the ol' swabby here!" The Colonel smiled at John through the depolarized helmet, meaning he was joking, and the Chief couldn't help but smile at it either.

Somebody popped in a data disk and began blaring the hyped up strains of the Helljumpers' anthem over the radio. Regs made it clear that unauthorized use of radio frequency's was wrong, very wrong, but this was an appropriate time, and Ortega seemed to agree as he stayed off the channel.

The pods started to heat up as fire cones started to form over the outside coating of the Human Entry Vehicles, HEV's. The chutes

deployed to slow their descent as the Helljumpers dropped through miles of sickly green clouds, fighters occasionally passing by the drop force in pursuit of an enemy. The outer coating tore away, revealing the crash cages and the occupants within.

Private Hasely heard a _snap_ as her main chute tore away, and then a bone jarring deceleration as the backup deployed. She began screaming over frequency two before everyone switched channels. Somewhere, on the surface of Venom, Hasely was about to dig her own grave.

Ortega closed his eyes. It was the death that every Helljumper feared, but never talked about. The inner coating tore away as topographical scans appeared on his map screen, slipstream tearing at his mask. He scanned over the map, then forwarded it to the assault force. Ortega's pod sped up, the other HEV's aligning on his to get a proper entry vector and follow the command "egg" down.

There were multiple reasons to this. One was that officers were expected to lead, rather than follow, and two, because the Helljumpers needed a point to rally on. Ortega's pod closed in on the ground, and he braced himself for the landing.

The Chief slowly opened his eyes. Blood splattered the inside of his visor, and his shield bar was flickering, slowly beginning to recharge. He shook his head to clear it, and the ground was darkened by a shadow. Ortega stood in front of him, offering a hand. John took it and stood, looking at the aerial battle raging nearby. Ortega pointed off behind the Chief. "There. That's our objective." The Spartan followed the Helljumper's finger, spotting a city in the distance.

The Colonel turned and surveyed his troops. He still had 582 effectives, 12 ODS'T's had been lost on the way down. "You see that in the distance? That's where we need to be! So get your asses in gear people!"

John stared after the city, able to just barely see the peak of the tallest building there. He didn't know who would even try to inhabit this place, but he was going to find out eventually.

** Alright not one of my longest chapters, but I wanted to get the Chief in on some of the action, and I wanted to get it out of the way so I can put something else forward. So, as one of my reviewers has said (brownie points for whoever gets his name) "I knew there was going to be something similar to an ODS'T based assault"...well, not his exact words, but close enough! Anyway, While I get to work on the next chapter and wait for you guys to review, I'm in a lot of pain and eating aspirin like candy. I popped my knee out of place when I flipped over a bush. I landed on my ass and my leg bent forward, so I hyperextended it, at least, that's what Colonel told me. So, off to the hospital tomorrow! See you guys next time! **

** -Great Fox MK3**

16. Delta

Alright, new chapter starting up on the 6**th****. I'll be working on this a lot tomorrow due to mom keeping me home from school to let my knee heal. I sprained it by landing on my ass, don't ask

how that works because I don't even know. Hooray for crutches and a knee immobilizer -- also, when you see bold Omega symbols, it means I've transitioned between different people. So, on to the story**

On board CSO Class Super Carrier **_Frozen Ignition**_

Inside Colonel Mccloud's quarters.

2550 hours, July 5**th****, 2578 (Cornerian Battle Calender)**

Fox's eyes were open the instant he heard the knock on his door. "Who is it?" The door opened slightly, revealing Krystal. She was wearing a pair of thin pants and a gray tank top, what most of the personnel on the ship wore, save for the Elites and ship crew. The vixen looked slightly upset.

Fox turned the lamp on beside him, standing and going to her, putting an arm around her. "Krystal, what's wrong?" The vixen shook her head. "I just need someone to talk to...about everything that's happening." Fox's jaw clenched, then relaxed as he hugged her closer to him. He led her to his bed and sat down on the edge with her.

The vixen looked over at him, her eyes locking with his. "Fox...when will we get to go back to Corneria again? I know that I've only recently become a pilot, but I already hate the bloodshed. The adrenaline I get makes me go wild when I start shooting down enemy planes...but when it all wears off, I feel horrible..." Fox pulled her against him. "Krystal, nobody likes doing it, but they have to, or else it'll be _us _getting shot down. It's a 'Them or us' type deal."

The vixen's only response was a soft acknowledgment in the form of a sigh. Fox felt her head come to rest on his shoulder, and he in turn put his head against hers. Krystal heard the vulpine's heartbeat, and felt the warmth radiating off of his body.

"Fox...What were your parents like?" Fox's pupils dilated slightly, and he got a far off stare. "They were the best parents anybody could have asked for...my father was a pilot, and the founder of the original Star Fox team, but he was betrayed by a team mate, and Andross killed him...it was my min reason for piloting in the first Lylat Wars." The vulpine recalled his father, a fond memory slipping into his mind of his father teaching him how to fly, the sound of their laughter echoing in his mind. He turned his head towards his bedside table. A pair of pilot's aviators sat there, reflecting a bit of the lamp light.

Fox began to describe his mother next. "My mother was also killed by Andross. Her car had been broken down, and my father was going to let her use his. He didn't know that Andross had planted a bomb on the car, intending to kill my dad. Both my father and I were sad, and longed for revenge."

Krystal could see into his mind. He was remembering the laughter, the smell of fresh baked cookies, of a photo of his parents, and then the overwhelming feeling of hate and anger as she saw Andross's face in the Colonel's memory. "Fox...I'm sorry..." He shook his head. "Don't be. I've avenged them. Andross is gone for good." Krystal hugged the

vulpine tighter, and the instant she did, the hatred and anger she was getting from him almost instantly melted away and his skin got hotter.

She looked up and saw him smiling. A slight blush had tinted his cheeks pink behind the brownish-orange fur. Krystal smiled to herself and went back to leaning her head against him. Her eyes eventually closed and she began speaking to the vulpine. "Fox...you wouldn't mind if I stayed in here tonight...would you?"

Fox's fur couldn't block out the dark red tint coming over his whole body. "N-no...I wouldn't m-mind at all" he replied shakily. Krystal continued to smile to herself.

"Fox, you're so easy to mess with." The vixen said, a laugh trying to creep into her voice. Fox smiled a bit wider, although it still looked awfully nervous, and he looked evn more like a fool now, but he had his reason. This is the vixen of his dreams, and she was asking if he would keep her company for the night? What more could a vulpine want?

Eventually, the vulpine calmed down and laid back with the blue vixen. It didn't take Krystal long to fall asleep, but Fox would be awake the rest of the night, unable to sleep as he thought about the blue fox in his arms.

****W W W W W****

Solomon smashed the console with his fist, sending sparks flying as the circuitry was crushed under his scaly hand.

"Shipmaster?" the other officers on the bridge turned at the sound of the console being pulverized, only the navigational officer daring to speak. They had all known of the defeat at Venom, but they didn't think it would anger their leader this much.

Solomon spun around, shooting a glare at the navigational officer and silencing him from saying anything further. A few moments passed and Solomon's shoulders relaxed and he slowly turned back toward the view screens in front of the command chair, slowly sitting down in it and letting the silence wash over him, leaving him to his thoughts.

"They won't get very far. Venom will be their first and last prize in this war. Send the 3rd Fleet of Lesser Malevolence to Aquas, and a cruiser battle group to Fichina. The only way around them is through Solar, and they wouldn't dare to go that far..."

Solomon didn't know it yet, but the Halcyon Forces would try him again and again.

****W W W W W****

The Master Chief clicked the safety of his rifle off, flipping the flashlights on his helmet into high beam mode. Venom's clouds had blotted out the meager light getting through from Solar, dropping the city into the pitch black end of the light spectrum.

The Helljumpers had split off into battalions, then companies, platoons, and finally squads to cover more ground. The Chief really

wished he had a tank right about now. Ortega had stayed back at regimental command with his brigade commanders. Regimental command was a firebase that had been set up only an hour or so before by a pair of UNSC Pods.

A barracks, reactor, and hospital had been the only things set up so far, while on the other side of the planet, Elite strike teams had been pacifying any enemy resistance there, and had reported in a few times, the most recent saying they had taken over an enemy supply base, and were researching what the Serpentis used, from up to their weapons down to their life in garrison.

"Chief, what exactly are we looking for?" Private First Class Jacob Lance asked. This was his first deployment, and he was getting anxious to shoot something.

The Chief was about to respond when he heard shuffling and flapping. He pointed his rifle to the left, down an alley, and made a hand signal for the ODS'T's to rally behind him. While the Spartan and the squad of 6 shuffled down the alley, the flapping grew louder, and something flew out of the darkness, landing on one of the marines' face. "Agghh! Get it off me, get it off!"

Another marine tried to pry it off his face, the flapping growing louder, now accompanied by hundreds of little shrieks.

The Chief started firing, and the marines followed suit, the gunfire drowning out the sound of the little shrieks, the sound of spent shell casings hitting the concrete, the clinking competing with the roar of gunfire and the ear splitting shrieks.

More of the things started flying out, one latching onto the Chief's helmet, allowing hi to get a good look at it. It was covered in brown fur, and was about the size of his fist. Six red eyes dotted it's face and fangs tried peeling through his visor.

The Spartan willed his armored hand to come up and grab it, crushing the thing in his gauntlet. He felt it cracking, and it's shrieks of pain grew louder and louder until it finally went limp in his palm, dead. He turned to see the marines finishing up with the rest. Sergeant Peterson, the squad leader, put a burst of three rounds into one of them. "Here's a little something to remember me by."

The Chief tapped his helmet where the head lamps were, meaning he wanted the marines to turn their rifle flashlights on.

He pushed his way through the marines and back out onto the street, knowing he would see more before the mission was over. Now he really wanted a tank.

****W W W W W****

Fox opened his eyes slowly and looked around. He felt a movement on his right shoulder. The vulpine looked over and saw a familiar blue vixen's head laying there. Krystal was still asleep, and had curled up next to him while they were asleep.

Fox smiled and kissed her forehead before slipping out from under her and gathering some clothes to put on. He thought about the blue vixen on his bed, and wondered what she was dreaming about. He had been

surprised when she had come in the night before, but now he was just happy that she didn't have another nightmare.

As the vulpine slipped out of the room in his flight suit, the door slid closed behind him, and Krystal's eyes eased open. She sat up, looking around for him, but noticing he was gone. The vixen tried to find him telepathically and felt that he was no more than 50 meters away, but that distance was growing.

She yawned and got up, almost mirroring what Fox had done only moments before. She had almost put her finger on the door release when a knock came. Krystal's finger paused inches from the button as the knock stopped her motion, yet it only lasted a fraction of a moment before she opened it, revealing Falco.

She tilted her head a bit. "Falco? Um...did you need to see Fox?" The avian shook his head.

"Colonel Ballard needed to see you, so I volunteered to come get you, but when I checked your room, it was empty, and when I asked Fox if he had seen you, he didn't say anything, so my next guess was to check here." The corner of Falco's beak tilted up in a smile. "Foxy and Krystal sittin in a tree, K-I-S-S-I-N-G." He started making a kissing face and the sounds to go with it.

Needless to say, Krystal began to blush, and her blue fur did nothing to help hide it. "Falco! Shut up!" She pushed him, scampering past him and down the hall to where her father usually was, Falco's laughter dying away as she got some distance from him.

As she came to Damon's door, it opened and allowed her in. Inside were her parents, both sitting at a small table and waiting for her. As she stepped in, the two looked up at her. Damon spoke first. "Hello Krystal, your mother and I have been waiting for you."

The vixen sat down next to them, wondering what they wanted. "Um...Falco said you needed me for something?" Krystal's mother spoke next. "Yes...we've noticed you and Fox growing closer, so we needed to tell you of something in the future. Our telepathy is stronger than yours, allowing us to dive deeper into a person's mind than you can. When all of this is over, you and Fox will have to make an important decision...a very important decision. So here's our question: will you be able to make it?"

Krystal didn't know what they were talking about. "What do you mean? What decision will I have to make?" Her mother shook her head. "We can't tell you. It's something that you will find out for yourself. We can't guarantee that this will happen, it's only a forewarning based on his thoughts when the two of you are together. Just be ready to make the decision when the time comes."

Krystal bit her lip, standing up from the table. "Alright..I'll be ready...is that all you wanted to talk to me about?" The two other Cerinians nodded, meaning Krystal was free to go. When the young blue vixen left the room, Damon and Haley looked at each other. "Do you really think she can do it under that type of pressure?" Damon asked.

Haley could only shrug. "I don't know darling...but it'll require all of their resolve, and we'll need to help them...we're the only other

two people alive that can...all the other Cerinians are dead, so nobody else can teach them."

Damon thought about it and nodded. "But would they really want to try and risk something that would end up killing them both?" Yet again, Haley could only shrug.

****W W W W W****

John was tired. These things were really taking a toll on the marines, even he was running out of energy. The Helljumpers wouldn't last much longer like this. They would have to turn back towards the HQ. He chinned the communications in his helmet. "Alright marines, we've gone far enough for now. We need to return back to the base-" He was cut off as a scream and static came through his speakers, and he killed the comm as he saw marines ripping their helmets off and rubbing their ears.

"Chief what the hell was that?" One of the marines asked. Some odd liquid was oozing out his left ear. A busted eardrum.

"I don't know marine, but we're heading back, I don't want anymore comm chatter, we're using hand signals or whispering until we get back and find out what happened.

The marines all nodded and followed behind him for the long trek back. The Chief's head hurt. His ultra sensitive hearing took a big hit from that, and now he constantly heard ringing, and his head was throbbing.

It took about an hour to make their way back. Ortega was waiting on them. "Why aren't any of you wearing your helmets?" He asked. The Chief motioned for the marines to go inside the recently upgraded base. It was now big enough to house the regiment, and had been upgraded all the way to being considered a fortress.

"Sir, when I tried using the comm, a loud scream and static came through my helmet speakers and the marines' helmets. One has a busted eardrum. We killed hundreds of little bat like things, they hid in the dark and swarmed us when we let our guard down."

Ortega nodded. "Alright Chief, go ahead and get inside, we'll get you rested up and the regiment will go back out tomorrow. I'm calling them all back with a rally beacon."

John relaxed, letting his shoulders sag once the base door had closed behind him, leaving Ortega outside to put up the beacon. He got to the barracks and sat on one of the beds that had been reinforced for him, allowing him to take off his armor and lay down. He didn't know what had happened on the patrol, but he knew he would find out eventually.

**** Alright, chapter done. I found a method to separate the things when the story is being read, because I don't freaking know how to actually make it look like it does in a book, all I get is what's up when you read through the story. Anyway, birthday tomorrow (The 23rd, turning 16 :D) so that's pretty good. Anyway, I hope you guys liked this chapter. UNTIL NEXT TIME.****

**** -Great Fox MK3****

17. Newcomers and Nightmares

****Symbols font didn't work for the changing POV thing. :sadfaec:
Anyway, not gonna waste much time on the foreword, so on to the
chapter.****

John took one last look at the city as he boarded the pelican to get off of Venom. He had been stuck here for a week, yet he already hated it with a passion. It was too dark and gloomy, and had taken a chunk out of the morale of the forces stationed on the planet. The constant attacks from the bat things in the city " which had been given the name 'Loma' " had been following patrols back to base and attacking, dropping morale ever further.

Command had decided to just leave the planet. It was taking too much for almost no tactical gain, deciding on just using the planet's orbit as a staging area. Several mobile docks and shipyards had been jumped into the system, turning the atmosphere around the quarantine planet into a naval yard and headquarters for the assault into Lylat.

John felt the dropship accelerate out of the planet's atmosphere, allowing him a relaxing sigh. Eventually, he felt gravity take hold again as the ship docked with one of the shipyards. The Spartan stood up and moved to the rear of the bay, waiting for the door to open up.

He was greeted by none other than a smiling Cortana. The former AI wore the standard naval technician jumpsuit, but this was an odd color: purple, rather than the normal blue, orange, and yellow suits. She shrugged as the chief cocked an eyebrow at her. "What? I like purple"

John only smiled and shook his head. "I figured as much, seeing as how you spent the majority of your life as a shade of purple."

Cortana puffed her cheeks out in annoyance at the comment, blowing the air out explosively, John already able to tell he had annoyed her, yet in a way that she had grown accustomed to in the man. "You're lucky you're bigger than me..." she said, pouting.

The Chief couldn't help but let a laugh escape from his mouth. "You can be such a tomboy at times."

Cortana smiled at him, her eyes narrowing in a playful manner as a few strands of jet black hair fell over her right eye. "Yes, but fortunately for us, you love it" She exulted an air of confidence in the comment, smirking at the NCO.

John rolled his eyes, a smile still plastered to his face as he stepped forward and brushed the hair out of her eyes. "Alright, fine, I do, happy now?"

Cortana nodded. "Yes, very..." Her nostrils flared as she began to smell something, then quickly covered her nose and mouth. "You stink! When did you last have a shower!"

John thought for a moment, then shrugged, eliciting a groan from Cortana. "You need a bath, and you're not getting any love from me until you stop smelling like crap."

The Spartan only grinned and pecked her cheek before taking her hand and leading her out of the hangar.

(**(Transition)**)

Fox pulled hard on the flight stick, pulling into a dive and barely evading a shot that would have punctured his cockpit, and likely torn him in half. He recovered from the dive and angled the nose up, bleeding as much speed and momentum as he could by performing a pugachevs cobra type move, the enemy ship rocketing past him.

The Colonel pushed forward on his flight stick and followed after the enemy ship, the crescents blazing on the wings. He jammed the firing stud on the yoke, sending dual blue lasers after the ship, but all of them missing as it barrel rolled through the incoming fire.

Fox noticed the enemy fighter continued to accelerate towards the capital city, a large missile hanging off one of the wings, flapping about in the slipstream. "What's the matter? Can't drop your bomb?" Fox knew the enemy wouldn't be able to let the bomb go from a distance, as it's tail had been knocked off in an earlier encounter, forcing him to hold it until he was closer or risk missing his target.

"Oh yes, but I'm going to destroy you first, _Colonel_." The last word out of the enemy pilot's mouth was filled with malice and contempt. Fox was having trouble keeping up with the enemy ace, somebody that was finally giving him a challenge.

Fox's communicator exploded into static. "Colonel McCloud and Solomon are off radar, it's a battle between aces now." He knew it was a member of the command staff telling the rest of the air force what was happening.

Solomon fired his engines and rolled out of the way, Fox's Arwing blazing past and right into the hail of fire Solomon had just released. Fox pulled into a turn, dove towards the surface of the planet "Corneria" and pulled out at the last moment, literally skimming mere inches over the water.

Solomon followed him as Fox pulled another pugachevs cobra, the crescent warrior shooting past him.

Fox was just about to pull the triggers when the ship disappeared, and was replaced with a familiar Arwing. Confused, he gunned the accelerator, catching up and looking inside. He saw Krystal smiling at him. He smiled back at her, and didn't notice the roar of the engines as the crescent fighter came up behind. Fox turned in his seat just to see Solomon launch a stream of laser fire...impacting Krystal's Arwing and turning it into a fireball.

Fox was frozen in horror as the remains of the Arwing and Krystal hurtled toward the ground, hitting it and exploding. When Fox finally looked up, he saw Solomon heading straight for him, and he closed his eyes the moment he saw the green flash of laser fire burst through his canopy and destroying him as well as the woman he loved had been

only a moment before.

(**(Transition)**)

Krystal was awake the instant that she heard Fox yell. She looked over at him and began slapping him, shaking him, anything to try to wake him up. He was covered in a cold sweat, and his heart was racing, Krystal felt his thought patterns going wild, and erratic enough to cause her to lose focus. She couldn't keep up with his mind.

She eventually held his nose, finally getting him to wake up and bolt up in the bed. He began frantically looking around, and upon seeing the blue vixen, wrapped her into a tight embrace. "Fox? Why were you screaming just now?"

The vulpine almost didn't hear her. "It was a nightmare. I don't want to try to remember it. I'd rather fling it as far away from my mind as I can..."

Krystal cocked her head. She knew that she could have probed his mind to see what it was, but decided not to. If it had Fox this upset, then she knew she wouldn't last long against the vision.

"Are you going to be okay?" She asked, rubbing his back and making him lay his head on her shoulder.

Fox sighed and closed his eyes. "Yeah...just a nightmare..." Krystal could only comfort the vulpine after the upsetting nightmare. She held him close until she felt the slight trembling stop and his breathing slowed back down.

When she looked at him, she found that he had fallen asleep again. She slowly and gently let his head go back to the pillow, closing her own eyes and laying next to him, eventually falling asleep.

(**(Transition)**)

Solomon sat alone on the bridge. He was in a sour mood today. It had only been three weeks since the Halcyon forces had taken Venom, but already their forces had spread as far as Katina and retaken the Army base there. He had already lost thousands of troops in the face of the Halcyon onslaught.

His losses continued to grow even as he contemplated them. The enemy forces had been growing all the time, almost as if every soldier he lost gave the enemy one extra troop to gun for him. He sighed and stood up, watching the looping hologram showing the force control of Lylat. The originally all red system, controlled by the Cornerians, had dwindled to a sea of green as the Serpentis armada had blitzed the Lylatians. Now, the sea of green was being encased in a landslide of red. The hologram looped over and over, as it had been doing for the past hour.

Solomon tapped a few buttons, sending out an order to all of his forces: He was recalling all of them to bolster the defenses at Corneria.

(**(Transition)**)

Falco couldn't sleep. He was sure most of the personnel on the carrier were stuck in the sweet embrace of a dream, yet he couldn't say he was getting the feeling. The avian kept glancing down at a picture in his palm.

The picture showed a blue falcon, of course it was Falco, and a black feline next to him. "Kat..." he muttered unconsciously. He hadn't heard anything from her since Corneria had come under fire and been evacuated.

Falco kept having dreams of her. He had been telling himself that he didn't like her, and that he was too busy with his life to get dragged down by the girl that had once been the second in command of the Hot Rodders, a gang he had once led.

She continued to find him wherever he went, always flirting with him. Even in the middle of war zones, she would still find time to try hitting on him. It had once occurred on Zoness, during the first Lylat wars. She had come out of nowhere, aiding the team in assaulting an enemy base under the enemy radar, destroying searchlights where the rest of the team couldn't get them.

Falco sighed as he got lost in his thoughts. "Where are you, Kat?" Falco slipped the picture back into his pocket and looked out one of the windows on the ship. He thought he saw a sparkle in the distance, a sparkle he had seen only once before.

**(Transition) **

Kat's eyes watered. They were getting irritated from staring at the radar screen in her ship, The Cat's paw II. She had stolen it from one of the enemy manufacturing plants that had been erected on Corneria after the Cornerian military had retreated.

She yawned and tried to stretch, but couldn't while still in the seat. Standing up, the black feline slipped out of the seat and back into the rear of the ship. It was a prototype, used for long range bombing missions where a fleet or battlegroup or even a single carrier would spook the enemy and make a stealthy bombing impossible. The ship had a rear hallway, leading to a bathroom, sleeping quarters, and small kitchen.

Laying in the floor, she tossed and turned to multiple positions, stretching and hearing a few cracks as she got what she wanted. Sighing happily, she began to stand up, but a rumbling sensation started to go through her. Kat's organs began to vibrate and her ultra sensitive hearing picked up a barely audible thrum.

Her breath caught in her throat as she scrambled back to her seat, her paws a blur as she tried to power the ship down. The lights went out, the displays went dead, and the vibration in her feet disappeared as the engines stopped.

The ship was completely dark, save for the glow of the radar. The little green dot that was the Cat's Paw being the only thing in view, then a large silhouette showing up. Kat slowly turned to look out the viewport.

A colossal ship passed by mere feet from the port. Kat's eyes widened

to unbelievable sizes as the whale-like ship moved her tiny fighter-bomber just with it's presence. It seemed like forever before the carrier finally slipped by and let her see the blue glow of the engines. She finally released her held breath. The thrum of the engines continued to grow, however, even though the carrier had passed. She looked back down at her radar and stopped breathing again.

The radar was covered in blips. Her viewport was filled with battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and the carrier from before. Kat wondered why she hadn't been found yet. This many ships had to have strong detection gear, and normally a ship like hers, despite being made for stealth insertions, would be picked up by this many ships.

Worse: she didn't know what side these ships belonged to. She sat there, waiting. "I'll wait until they leave before I jump out of here..." Kat muttered.

The ships in front of her began to slow down, their engines dimming to a faint glow as they powered down to station keeping levels. Kat groaned and put her head in her paw. She was stuck here until the ships moved on.

(**(Transition)**)

"Shipmaster, I recognize that silhouette, I need to get closer to see if my suspicions are correct." Falco stated. The white armored Elite in front of him tilted his head and clicked his two remaining mandibles.

"Alright bird, but your time is short." The Elite sat back, stating that Falco's time was already ticking by.

The avian rolled his eyes and sprinted off to the hangar to get to his Arwing.

(**(Transition)**)

Kat sat there, tapping her foot, killing time until the fleet left. She heard a ping and looked back down at the radar, seeing a small dot " about the size a single ship would be " and wondered what was happening now.

She looked out her viewport and saw a sparkle in the distance. It was getting closer " and it was moving fast. She didn't dare power her ship up until she knew what was happening.

It took only a few seconds for it to close on her, and then she saw a blue and white blur rocket past her. She tried to turn to see what it was, but the ship wasn't moving. If it had wanted to destroy her, it would have fired on her when it passed, and she knew that color scheme. She brushed her paws across the control panel and powered her ship back up, turning to see the other ship right in front of her, a cocky looking blue falcon staring at her with his feet on his control panel, as if he had been waiting forever.

"Falco?"

**(Transition)**

"Dad...Fox has been having an abnormal amount of nightmares lately...do you know anything about why nightmares occur?" Krystal was with Damon, he had been tuning his fighter, attempting to perfect it for any battles he would be needed in.

"I can't give any advice unless I know what they're about. I have, however, noticed the nightmares." Damon stated, tightening one more bolt and firing up the engines.

Krystal's eyes narrowed slightly and she crossed her arms. "Are you sure? I mean...he's not been getting much sleep because of them lately, Bags are forming under his ey-" she was cut off as a roar filled the hangar bay, the shields that covered the bay entrance flaring as two ships passed through. An Arwing glided in to land next to Damon's Raptor MKII, and another ship, colored an odd purpleish-pink and much larger than the bright blue and white Arwing.

It took only a few moments for them to land, but when they did and Falco jumped out to go to the other pilot, Krystal smiled on the hunch that was forming in her mind. Her suspicions were correct when the bay door to the fighter bomber opened and Kat Monroe stepped onto the deckplate.

I think this chapter was pretty easy to fill out. I would have had it up on the 3**rd****, but I'm moving, so my interwebs has been out...however, today is good day, because I can upload this. Anyway, hope you guys enjoyed this chapter, until next time.**

~Great Fox MK3

18. Taking back the homeland

Hope you guys enjoyed the last chapter, along with the unexpected guest at the end. Anybody seeing any signs that a war is nearing it's end? *CoughworldwarIIcoughhack* erm...sorry about that. Anyway, on to the chapter.

"Falco! Wh-what are you doing here? I didn't know you were anywhere near here!" Kat exclaimed, eliciting a smirk from the avian just in front of her. He had docked his Arwing to the _Cat's Paw II, _switching over to her more spacious cockpit where the two could talk without the static of a comm system on their words.

"I could ask you the same thing. I'm the person with this fleet, you on the other hand, are a lone wanderer. We're nowhere near Titania, so I don't know why you're here." Falco explained.

Kat shook her head. "It's not safe on Zoness, and sandstorms are high on Titania this time of the year. Both of the old hideouts are out of reach for me now. I've been hiding from the Serpentis patrols, but I managed to steal this fighter from one of their plants, repainted it more to my liking, upgraded the weapons a bit...nothing too fancy"

"So you don't have anywhere to stay then?" Kat shook her head.

"No, like I said, both hideouts are out of the question, so I've been staying in the ship. Why?"

Falco jerked a feathery thumb towards the Halcyon fleet just outside the viewport. "You can stay on the ships with us. We're about to jump through the system and drive on Corneria. If we can grab their leaders, then we can end the war then and there. We need all the ace pilots we can get for the initial air strike."

Kat looked out the viewport, looking at the warships surrounding her own. "I don't know Falco...I'm not the same pilot I used to be...I haven't had to fly for my life in years, and I don't know if I'd be of any use in the battle."

The avian put a wing on her shoulder. "Kat, you're still one of the best pilots I know. You think I don't remember your little escapades during the first Lylat Wars? When you dropped in and helped with the stealth raid on Zoness? Or helping save the Great Fox during that ambush in Sector Z?"

Kat shook her head. "No, I thought you had forgotten. You don't exactly have the best memory." Kat allowed a small smile to show on her mouth. "Alright Falco, I'll join you...but what do I get out of-"

Falco closed the distance between them and planted a kiss on her lips, the feline squeaking against his beak, her eyes wide open. It took her a few moments to realize what was happening, letting her close her eyes and start enjoying it.

Fate would have it that the second she realized what Falco was doing, he pulled away. "Consider that a down payment" He said with a wink. Kat smiled softly at the avian.

"Maybe I will, but just know that you don't get it back" The feline smirked at him and went back to the controls. "Alright Falco, whee do you want me to park this thing?" She looked back and the avian was gone. She felt her ship vibrate as Falco undocked from the _Cat's Paw II_.

As she turned back to the viewport, she saw his ship blast off towards the super carrier. Kat rolled her eyes and pressed the throttle forward, rocketing after him. She was surprised at the speed it possessed, actually able to keep up with the Arwing despite being as large and bulky as it was.

It wasn't long before the two single ships passed through the docking field for the hangar. Falco eased his ship into a small cleared out area, Kat following close behind.

As the ships landed and powered down, the two aces got out of their ships and looked around. Not many people were in the hangar bay, as most of the crew was sleeping, due to the time being around 2 o'clock in the morning.

The space outside, filled with pinpricks of stars, suddenly flashed a deep blue and then everything flared into a white canvas, than it went to pitch black, the only other things appearing being the rest of the battlegroup. The ships had jumped to slipspace. The assault on Corneria would begin in 7 hours.

"Kat, lets get some sleep, we only have a few hours, and knowing the scale of this attack, we'll need it." Falco stated, offering the feline his wing to lead her to where she would be staying. Kat nodded and slipped her arm around his.

"Such a gentleman" She said with a teasing smile. Falco rolled his eyes. "Always the flirt, Kat." The black feline grinned at him.

"Of course, you know me so well Falco," Falco sighed and started walking, breaching the bulkheads and starting down the halls.

It wasn't long before he reached the quarters where the pilots stayed, stopping at Krystal's room. "You can stay in here for the night, as Krystal's been sleeping in Fox's room for the past week or so, says it's because he has a lot of nightmares. I don't really blame him."

Kat nodded slightly and palmed the door release, allowing the steel to slide open and grant her access. "Thanks Falco...I guess I'll see you again in a few hours?" The avian nodded at her, giving her a thumbs up and palming the button, closing the door and leaving Kat to her thoughts.

__**(Transition)**__

Fox heard the alarms warbling through the ship, bolting out of bed and scrambling to put on his flight suit as he saw Krystal roll over and hide under the blankets, groaning. "Krystal, get up! We have to get ready to scramble!"

The vixen groaned again, making Fox shake his head and crawl over her, tearing the blankets from her grasp, revealing her, curled into a ball and trying to go back to sleep. Fox rolled his eyes and groaned. "Krystal, we have to go NOW."

Krystal sighed explosively and rolled over, getting up slowly and groggily equipping her violet colored flight suit. "I'm up, happy now?" Her normally wide open blue eyes were still half closed, narrowing even more as she yawned.

"Yes, now come on, we're in the first assault wave and I need to get the plan down. We launch in half an hour, so let's go." He took her hand and led her out of the room, sprinting down the hallways with her.

He could hear the alarms faintly in the back of his mind, and the clanging of his boots against the metal as he dashed through the purple steel hallways. The blood was rushing through his ears and his heartbeat was deafening.

He saw the doors to the hangar bay ahead, dashing through them and weaving his way through the traffic to get to the squadron. Damon, Falco, and the Star Wolf team was there, but he didn't recognize the black feline with them.

"Who are you?" Fox asked, wondering where she had come from.

The feline only smiled. "It's been awhile Foxy" The vulpine recognized that voice quickly. "Kat! When and how did you get

here?"

Kat pointed at Falco. "Flyboy found me drifting around last night and asked if I wanted to join up with you guys. I said yes, but it took a little persuasion on his part." Kat winked during the last statement.

Fox blinked, shrugging off the initial shock of seeing her after all these years, Damon snapping him out of it.

"Alright, we're the first assault wave. Our spies have indicated a special ace is mixed in with the ranks of the normal pilots. Of course, these normal pilots go down easily enough, but this ace...I haven't seen anyone like him in years. He flies a special fighter with a crescent on each wing, he goes by the name 'Ozone', because when he gets you in his sights, that'll be all that's left of you. He's their leader from what I've heard, and his name is Solomon Serant. So far, we know he's a high value target and must be shot down if we are to succeed."

Fox stepped forward. "Colonel, you said he had a crescent on his wings?" Damon nodded. "he's real..." Fox mumbled quietly.

"Something wrong Fox?" Damon asked, raising an eyebrow.

"No, nothing's wrong, I've just been having a lot of nightmares lately, most of them involving an enemy ace of that description, usually shooting me down. I don't know..I think I'm gonna meet a real challenge today..I just hope I'm wrong about that prediction..."

Damon nodded, turning back to the display. "Alright, you guys heard the Colonel, if this guy's bad enough o shake him up like this, then we're ready for a real fight if we want to get our home back. Stay sharp, stay with your wingman, and above all else, come back alive."

The squadron let out a roar of approval. They were ready, and they were going to destroy the enemy in the skies of Corneria today.

**(Transition)**

Solomon growled and turned, backhanding the other serpentis officer hard enough to knock him off his feet. "What do you mean that an enemy fleet just jumped in! I told you to monitor the entire system! They couldn't have jumped from Titania all the way here unless they used a warp gate, and they don't have the resources or time to build it, so tell me how they got here!"

The officer lay on the floor of the command center, trembling. "I don't know sir. I just got the reports and brought them here. I don't know how they did it, and even if I had a chance of finding out, I wouldn't have the time to study it."

Solomon growled again, this time more menacing and dripping with malice. "Whatever, get all of our forces back here, I want fleets jumping in behind the Halcyon forces and flanking them while our planet battlegroups box them in. Scramble every single fighter and soldier we have, NOW!"

The officer nodded, scrambling away as quickly as his arms and legs would pull him, going to give the order to the operations controller.

Solomon turned back to the data pad in his hand. The tiny screen was filled with text, all of it based on the vulpine in the picture: Fox McCloud. "So, the child has returned. My pawn is no longer here to use as an illusion. Not like I can bring him back now anyway, dying three times at the hands of the same pilot doesn't make me want to use him again. Fox knows his weaknesses...but not mine. I got rid of James, and I can just as easily destroy Fox..." he turned to an aid beside him. "You, get the technical crew to prep my ship, I'm going up as soon as the enemy fighters hit the atmosphere." the aid nodded, hesitating a bit. "Go, NOW!"

The aid hurried away as the officer had done before him, not wishing to incur the fleet master's wrath. Solomon turned back towards the viewscreen, looking towards the blue skies of Corneria, knowing they would soon be filled with swarms of fighters. "Soon, McCloud, soon..."

(**(Transition)**)

"John...you're being sent back down again, aren't you?" Cortana asked, her eyes pleading to him that she didn't want him going into another battle. "Your luck almost ran out on the Ark, it's going to run dry eventually...maybe even when you get there."

John frowned. "Cortana...I have to do this. It's what I was born to do..." He hugged her, trying to reassure the brunette. "I'll make it back, I promise."

Cortana thought for moment, remembering the last time he had promised her something. "...and when you make a promise..." John finished it for her. "I keep it."

She sighed. "John...I want you to promise me something else...when you get back, promise me you'll try to retire...for my sake. I can't help you anymore in those battles like I used to..." John thought for a moment, all of the times she had saved him those many years ago before he relented to her.

"...I promise."

(**(transition)**)

Wolf looked at Panther, Leon, and finally Olivia. Panther and Leon saw the two lock eyes and thought to give them a bit of privacy, going to check on their ships. The departure of the two left Wolf and Olivia alone. The lupine looked at her slightly bulging stomach. "Olivia, I'm gonna have to ask you to stay on the ship for this one..."

The husky was silent, biting her lip and looking at her crimson flight suit sitting on wing of her Wolfen, right next to the howling wolf emblem painted next to the cockpit. "But Wolf-"

The lupine cut her off. "I don't want to risk it. You're still learning, and this is the biggest battle of the war. Hundreds, if not

thousands of ships will be in this furball, maybe even capitol ships. Do you know how much flak coverage a destroyer has? Enough to put a polka dot pattern in a single ship from a mile away. When we go in to attack, we'll be meters from their guns, making it that much easier to hit us. If you had gotten time in before this all started, like Krystal, then I would have considered it, but I don't wanna lose you...or the child you're carrying."

Olivia looked back at the father of her unborn child, the little wolf-husky curled inside her, barely beginning it's growth cycle. "Alright...but if you don't make it back, I'll kill you." She said, smiling softly at the one eyed mercenary leader.

Wolf's face cracked into a rare smile.
"Deal"

**(Transition)**

Fox and Krystal stood beside each other, their hands interlocked as the briefing began. They looked around the room, spotting Wolf across the crowd, a picture in his hand, his face locked in a look of determination. The Master Chief sat with his arms crossed, his face expressionless behind the golden visor as far as they could tell, with the Sangheilli arbiter, now clad in jet black armor with a few glowing orange marks where the lights in his armor were sitting next to him. Damon sat next to Krystal, staring at the holograph of their forces, his mind racing on what to do once he got into his fighter.

Falco and Kat were in the back row of the circular seating that everybody else was in, Kat leaning against the Avian, a blue feathered arm wrapped around her waist. Slippy and Peppy weren't there. Both of them had been locked in maintenance and planning since the invasion of Katina.

Fox saw the lights begin to dim as General Pepper, Fleet Admiral Hood, and Fleet Master Vadum step to the center of the room, where a small projector buzzed to life, a tiny blue hologram coming to life and coating the faces of the Human, Lylatian, and Sangheilli pilots in a soft blue tint.

General Pepper pressed a few buttons, a map of Corneria expanding from the tiny blue hologram in planetary format. "This is Corneria, our objective and what's going to end this war. Our mission is to clear the space around Corneria of any enemy ships. This will be taken by the Sangheilli and Human navies and air fleets, with the Lylatian navy and air force providing support. Once spacial superiority has been achieved, the ships in space will lower themselves into the atmosphere and provide close support to the ground forces after gaining atmospherical air superiority."

Admiral Hood took over from there, highlighting several points on the planet. "After the navies and air forces have gained control of the skies and space, we will send in thousands of assault boats, each containing a brigade of infantry and armor. After gaining a foothold on the planet, the brigades will form into regiments, eventually completing our force of 143 regiments. They will each get assigned to a corps, and then an army to organize them better. These highlighted areas are where most of the forces will land, and after gaining a better knowledge of enemy deployments, we will put more on the

surface where they are needed."

General Pepper highlighted an area in red, circling it. "This is Corneria city. This is where we know the enemy will hold out after we push far enough inland. This is our main objective for the last phase of the mission. The commanders will take over and give commands from here. The commanders for the ground armies will be myself, Admiral Hood, and General Phosphate of the Cornerian 2nd Army before we evacuated the planet at the start of the war, now promoted to four stars. The leaders of the Navies will be Fleet Master Vadum and Admiral Harper of the UNSC navy. The air forces will be led by General Swan, and once they breach the atmosphere, command will be handed over to Omega Colonel Ballard and Colonel McCloud."

"Now, once we have cornered the enemy at the capital, send in everything, don't let up even for a second. You never know what a desperate enemy will do, and when we corner them, that's exactly what they will be. We launch in 30 minutes. Get to your ships and prepare to launch. Dismissed."

**(Transition)**

The pilots gathered around their cluster of ships. Damon sat at the lead landing gear piece of his interceptor Raptor. Krystal, Fox, Falco, Kat, Wolf, Panther, and Leon stood there, waiting for him to say something.

"I want you all to check your ships while you have the chance. Make sure they're fully fueled and armed, perform as much light maintenance as you can. We don't have much time, so get to it." The Omega Colonel stood and turned around, beginning his own maintenance checks as every body scattered to their ships.

Fox and Krystal looked over their ships, each of them finishing up quite quickly and going to help others get their ships prepared. Fox stopped next to Wolf, crouching down to hold a piece of paneling open for the struggling Lupine. "Need some help?"

Wolf looked over at Fox, startled slightly. "Yeah...thanks Fox" Wolf reached back inside where he had been tinkering and tightened one more bolt, then pulled out and gave Fox the thumbs up to release the paneling so he could bolt it back in place

"What were you looking at in the briefing room?" Fox asked. Wolf bit the inside of his cheek. "Olivia...she's staying on the ship for this battle. She's only flown a little bit, not enough to be considered for a flight in this battle. I don't want her flying...especially not with her pregnant..."

Fox's eyes widened a bit. "She's...pregnant?" Wolf nodded. "I'm not going to risk losing both her and the baby. I don't know what I'd do if I lost either of them."

Fox looked back at the Wolfen in front of him, the red and black coating looking as intimidating as it's pilot. "I understand...but Wolf, just try not to get too wreckless. You don't want to put them in the situation I was in..."

Wolf nodded. "I know. I met your father once, but it wasn't for long. Basically a few card games on a distant supply station when I was

beginning my mercenary career, about 13 years ago...We need to continue this some other time. I need to talk to Panther and Leon for a few moments, and you would do well to do the same with your team."

Fox smiled a bit. "Yeah, I'll do that. Thanks Wolf." Fox turned away, beginning to go back to where his ship sat. "Fox." The vulpine turned at the mention of his name, Wolf took a few steps forward, holding his hand out. "Good luck Fox." The vulpine took his rival's hand and grasped it firmly, shaking it. "Same to you Wolf."

Once the two parted ways, Fox stepped into the circle of his peers. Each of them smiled at Fox, even the normally stone faced Damon. "Alright you guys, today, we end this war. A year ago, this war sent us on an exodus from our planet, and today, we take it back. Does anybody remember what tomorrow is?" Nobody shook their head. "Tomorrow, is Christmas, and I'm sure that a lot of people want to be home for Christmas. That blue planet...that's our home, and we're taking it back." The pilots around him cheered, Fox's little motivational speech skyrocketing their morale.

Alarms blared as the call to launch came in, and the hangar shields went up, the doors opening up to reveal the enemy fleet and Corneria in the distance.

Fox climbed into his fighter, and everybody behind him did likewise, the ships called in a countdown clock to where they would all rocket out of the bay at the same time. Within thirty seconds, the timer hit 00, and the delta formation rocketed out of the bay, forming up into squadrons of four. Fox, Kat, Krystal, and Falco formed the first formation, and Wolf, Damon, Leon, and Panther formed the second.

>Two cruisers came into view, and they were closing fast. Fox keyed his communicator. "Alright everyone, we're gonna blast one of those cruisers out of orbit. Wolf, your formation will go after the one on the left, and everybody else hits the one on the right. Strike on my mark. The one on the left is Master 1, and the right one will be Master 2. Strike...now!"<p>

The flight broke off, each heading in for their respectful target. Fox led his squadron in close, rolling through the laser fire, seeing enemy ships and allied ships alike blossoming into fireballs as space was completely covered in red and blue strobes of death. Fox went into a dive, hiding his ship in the crevice that ran along the lateral lines of the cruiser, where the guns couldn't reach. "Form in behind me, I'm taking shots at the shield generator, try to blow them out of commission on your passes, we won't get another shot at this without taking heavy damage."

He saw the rectangular generator behind next to the hangar. He jammed the firing studs, twin blue lasers screaming from the ports under the wings. He got within 10 meters and rolled out of the way, then banked into a tight turn, rolling around just in time to see the rest of the fighters pass by, and when Kat slipped by, her heavy cannons taking out the last bit of resistance keeping the shields up

"Yeah! Bulls-eye!" Kat yelled, turning to form up behind the rest of the flight. "Good job Kat, now get ready to pass through the hangar and take out the inner power generator, it'll stop their fire for about 2 minutes, just enough time to get the heavies in and finish it

off." Fox said, going through what would be next.

The group went a kilometer out, then turned and gunned it for the opening in the ship, little bodies tumbling out into the cold grasp of the void, suffocating in the vacuum. Fox and the rest of the flight screeched through the hangar, firing wildly and hitting the generator.

When they came back out on the other side, the guns were dark, knocked out of commission until the engineers could get them back up. Fox called in heavy support. "This is Colonel McCloud, the cruiser on the right has been silenced. Shields and weapons are down, but not for long. We need a destroyer or higher to beach this whale."

The comm responded almost immediately. "You got it Colonel, Battleship Orpheon moving in to put a hole through it." Fox heard the human captain drawl through the comm as a hulking battleship lumbered into range, it's MAC cannon, a cannon that would launch 300 tons of tungsten at whatever it was targeting, spit out 3 rounds.

The cruiser tried to turn and make itself a smaller target. The white hot metal that was flying across space impacted the cruiser's nose, gutting the ship from stem to stern and knocking it back a few hundred kilometers, spinning around and venting atmosphere, causing it to tumble out of control.

The second shell hit it in the rear, knocking it's engine completely off, the momentum transferring and knocking it even closer to the planet. It would soon get caught in Corneria's gravity well.

The third and final round hit the ship right where it's fusion reactor was. When the reactor overloaded, hundreds of mini suns blossomed through the gray colored steel ship. It started to fall into the gravity well, trapped with no form of propulsion as it began to burn up in the thermosphere, a cone of fire forming around the doomed cruiser.

(**(Transition)**)

Wolf saw the first cruiser tumble into Corneria's atmosphere, bulbous and bloated from the explosions still decimating it's hull. "Alright you guys, they know what we're trying to do, we need a new tactic. The same thing won't work twice. We're gonna take out the engines first. Be careful though, they've activated their gatling lasers. Those things don't have to aim, all they have to do is cover every square inch of space and eventually they'll hit us."

Wolf flew towards the rear of the cruiser. "Arm your smart bombs and aim for the engine you're aligned with." Wolf formed the flight into a flying diamond. He was the top, Leon was on the left, Panther was on the right, and Damon was on the bottom. "Strike...now!" Each member released their bombs and peeled away from it their course so they wouldn't get caught in the blast.

They looked in their radars and saw huge thick spots where the cruiser engines would be. "Alright, turn and check it out." The flight tuned and saw the shielding flare and fail. "Alright, fire away and take those engines out!" The flight went back in, gunning their afterburners and hitting the firing studs as fast as possible.

They saw explosions as the engines hit critical levels and exploded. "Strike!" Wolf cried out as the same battleship from before saw the events unfold and moved in. "Star Wolf team, this is Battleship Orpheon, coming in to clean up"

Wolf pressed the comm button. "Roger that Orpheon, Star Wolf team looking for more targets." The Battleship pulled back in, opening it's archer missile tubes and launching all of it's missiles. Each pod held eight tubes, and in each tube sat 10 archer missiles. Orpheon fired all 186 pods. Over 14,000 missiles launched after the cruiser.

The warship never stood a chance. As soon as the first missile hit, it was doomed. Fire blossomed across the cruiser. In the entire minute and a half that it took the missiles to hit, the hull plating was vaporized, leaving nothing but a floating skeleton. Hundreds of thousands of goblets of molten steel and titanium floated around in space where the cruiser used to be. "Both cruisers are down! Air Force and Navy, you are cleared for atmospheric entry! Orpheon out!"

Wolf pressed a few buttons. "Hey Fox, it's time for stage two of our mission. Meet me over Vol city, 200 miles southeast of Corneria City. Wolf out."

**(Transition)**

Fox kept the squadron formed up, waiting for Wolf and his half of the wing to arrive. He saw the three Wolfens and Damon's interceptor, and started pushing his throttle forward a bit, increasing in pressure the closer they got.

He was pushing all the way by the time the wing was back together. "Good job out there, Wolf" Fox said, congratulating the lupine on his performance. "You weren't too bad out there yourself, pup...gettin' a bit sloppy though" The lupine flashed a toothy grin in Fox's direction.

"Right, whatever you say Wolf...change to a fleet wide comm channel." Fox pressed a few buttons, adjusting his frequency, as did the rest of the aces. "This is Colonel McCloud, all pilots ready for battle form at Lagrange point three. We need to launch into the atmosphere in five minutes to keep our momentum. Anybody needing to rearm and refuel should do so now, before the fur starts flying...no pun intended."

Fox waited for the next five minutes, and over that short span of time, hundreds of fighters formed on their wing, as well as three UNSC Cruisers and a single Leviathan class dreadnaught. The dreadnaught, named Regence, was the pride of the Cornerian navy. The four capital ships would provide anti air fire and ground support to the advancing troops.

Fox heard Admiral Harper broadcasting on the Regence's channel. "Colonel McCloud, Colonel Ballard, this is Admiral Harper. I've been given command of your dreadnaught, hope you don't mind." Fox smiled a bit. "Not at all, Admiral, as long as you can handle her."

Fox heard the human man laugh. "You got it Colonel, I'll keep her in

one piece. I'm right behind you when we go in on this, so try to show me why you're so special around these parts" Fox smirked. "Is that a challenge, Admiral?"

"You bet your ass it is, Colonel!" Fox laughed again. "Alright, I'll try not to show off too much." Fox looked at the mission timer. The rendezvous limit had 10 seconds left. "Alright, 10 seconds, get ready for the battle for Corneria. In 5...4...3...2...1...LAUNCH!" Fox pushed his thrusters to the max, and so did every other pilot in the formation, the capital ships steaming after them into the atmosphere.

The battle for Corneria had just begun.

(**(Transition)**)

Solomon stared at the display. "Looks like I may have to actually destroy him. A pity." Solomon turned from the display, looking at an aid. "You, go, have them prep my ship for battle." The aid nodded, quickly running from the room.

The Serpentis leader looked back at the display and noted that there were eight special ships at the head of the formation, one of them looking as if to be the leader. You'll be with your father soon McCloud..."

(**(Transition)**)

The Master Chief checked his weapon once more, strapping himself into the drop pod. All around him he saw more black armored figures getting into HEV's not unlike his own. The Helljumpers were deploying in force today. They would lead the assault into the capital, clearing the way for armor and later artillery emplacements.

The ODST's quickly grabbed their gear and packed into pods. This time, not just 600 Helljumpers would be dropping into hell, but thousands of them, all of them armed to the teeth. More Sangheilli shock troopers would be dropping with them.

The pod doors suddenly closed, and the HEV started to turn around. John could see all the other pods lining the stomach of the troop transporter. ODST's were prepping themselves for the drop in the final seconds. The red light at the top of the display began to blink, getting ready for the launch as soon as it beeped three times and turned green.

Colonel Ortega, the ODST regimental commander from before, appeared on the viewscreen to the left, his visor tinted blue as it polarized. The right screen flickered to life, another ODST appearing, but the trooper's visor was golden, rather than blue.

The golden visored trooper had finished checks and sent data packets to each of the ODST's in the drop-group. Lieutenant Commander Elizabeth Roebuck, their regimental commander this time around, despite the fact that Ortega outranked her.

Ortega called out to his troopers. "Troopers! We are green, and very, VERY mean!" The red light beeped. Once...twice...three times and flashed bright green, launching the thousands of pods from orbit into the atmosphere.

The ODS'T's could see the wreckage from the space battle. Hulls and skeletal structures floating around in space, both Halcyon forces and Serpenti's forces alike. They looked like whale bones floating around in orbit.

The shock troopers dropped through a layer of clouds, giving them a glimpse of Corneria City. Ortega piped up. "Commander, 15 klicks off the deck."

Roebuck nodded. "Get ready troopers, we'll be boots to the dirt in 45 seconds." Every ODS'T knew that when you had a time until you hit the ground, it would make it even longer. Every second that ticked by meant you sat through another second of possibly getting hit by anti air fire, or another second for your HEV to malfunction and cause you to fall to your death.

Green strobes went off in the distance, and it wasn't long before fiery green lances of plasma started flying through the mass of pods. A few were hit and either vaporized or turned into a pile of slag mid-flight. The anti air guns had started going off.

The Chief saw the altimeter and tensed himself up as the pod hit the ground. Everything went black.

**(Transition)**

Fox saw the green strobes in the distance and knew the Helljumpers had begun their assault. "All attack class pilots, go in for the AA guns. Interceptors go in fast and hard, knock as many of their ships out of the sky in one pass as you can. Watch out for friendly fire though and try not to get yourselves killed".

The mass of fighters, bombers, and interceptors split. The bombers and attacker aircraft lumbered along, the fighter class ships lagging along behind with them for close support, and the interceptor class ships screaming away to get into a shootout with the enemy ships.

Fox, Damon, Krystal, and Falco shot through the skies, vapor cones forming on the noses of their ships as they broke the sound barrier almost immediately. The four ships continued to accelerate even further, with around another hundred interceptors trying to keep pace.

Kat, Wolf, Leon, and Panther continued to slowly make their way across the skies to their targets. The Star Wolf team's Wolfens had been converted to attackers. Wolf saw the little red dots indicating mission critical targets at the far edge of his radar screen. "50 miles from the closest target, keep current speed and formation"

The interceptors were just getting ready to start their battle. Fox pressed a button, arming his smart bombs. "Arm smart bombs. Contact with enemy waves in 30 seconds. Fire smart bombs on my mark." They continued to close in until the timer read distance was only a mile. "Mark Fire all bombs now!"

The interceptor wave launched their bombs, over a hundred little red dots rocketed from the Halcyon interceptor force, quickly closing on the Serpenti's air cover. Fox counted down in his mind.

"3...2...1..."

Fox's vision went white as all the nova bombs exploded in the midst of the enemy formation.

(**(Transition)**)

John's vision cleared, and he could see blurry figures. He looked around, shaking his head to try and clear it. He could see the cracked door blast door of his HEV. There was a blinking red light where the firing stud activators were to blast the door off.

He pressed all four of them but nothing happened. Cursing, the Chief unbuckled his harness, planting a foot on the seat of the pod. He pushed off with that one leg and shouldered the blast door off it's frame, falling forward. "Crap." Two ODST's came and tried to help him up. It was Ortega and Roebuck. "Chief, it's time to move up." Ortega stated.

"How far in are we?" John asked, still trying to clear his head completely. Roebuck sent over a map to him. "We're about two miles from the capital building. Only 20 ODST's could drop into the area we went into. All the others were scattered and had to join up with other formations. We can sneak around and get in the back of the building if we're quiet enough. From what I'm guessing, they didn't see us drop in here, and if they did, they only sent a few small patrols out, thinking we can't do very well in a firefight with them."

John studied the map, then closed it in a file that was easy to access from the central menu. "Alright. Lets get moving." John pulled an MA6D assault rifle from the pod's interior and inspected it for damage. It was a standard issue assault rifle. It hadn't differed much in appearance from the human-covenant war a few decades back. He also grabbed a shotgun from the inside of the pod as well, sliding it onto his back and clamping it there magnetically.

The ODST's split into two groups of ten, Roebuck going with the first group and Ortega and the Chief going with the other. Ortega was on point, his rifle shouldered. Every so often the trooper on point would stop, cautioned in case of an enemy patrol.

The squads continued like this for about half an hour before the trooper on point for first squad suddenly dropped to the ground, the rest of the squad dropping as well. John, saw two huge serpentis troopers lumber into view. Normally, the serpentis army consisted of various forms of reptiles, but these two soldiers were enormous, and looked a bit like dragons.

They were both easily 9 feet tall, a pair of wings sprouting through their armor, the sun reflecting off the armor and their scales. One was green, and wore elaborate gold armor, and his cohort was black, red armor coating his body. The gold armored trooper relayed orders to the red armored ally, rows of sharp teeth bristling in his mouth like that of a shark.

The gold armored serpentis suddenly stuck his nose in the air, sniffing it. His claw dipped for the weapon at his thigh.

"Open fire!" the trooper on point shouted, standing and unloading on

the serpentis with his assault rifle. It burped round upon round of fire at him, the rest of the squad firing as well, causing a chorus of gunfire to drown out the screams of pain coming from the enemy. His red armored comrade hesitated, then turned tail and ran. John saw and put his weapon away, sprinting after the enemy and catching up quickly. He dove for the dragon's legs and took him down, crawling on his chest and hammering him with his fists, knocking teeth askew and hearing it's snout crack as the bones were pulverized by the warrior's two handed barrage of steel.

John pulled his right hand up and brought it as far back as he could before rocketing it down and crushing the enemy's skull. He stood, shaking the gore off his gauntlet and looking around. The gunfire had ceased and the troopers were coming out of the woods around him, looking away from the gorey mess. Ortega looked down and nodded. "Alright, there goes our element of surprise. I'm sure they had to hear that at their command center, but just to be sure, we're going dark again. I'd prefer we don't have any more confrontations like that. Get back on track."

The troopers formed back into a column, heading towards the capitol building.

(**(Transition)**)

Fox watched as the bombers executed their runs on the target positions. He saw the radar was clear, save for a single dot approaching at high speed. "Hey, anybody else getting a single dot on their radar screen? It's coming up fast."

The rest of the flight checked and sent their responses. "Damon keyed his mic. "I've got one coming up. I don't know what it is but-" Damon was cut off as another voice broke through to the channel. "Colonel McCloud. I've been waiting for this since I killed your father"

The channel was silent for a moment. "What's wrong McCloud? Did I hurt your feelings?" Fox turned towards the radar dot and saw a glint in the sky as the fighter approached. It opened fire on the group. "Whoa!" Falco yelled out as he tried to dodge it. Falco's eyes widened as the lasers closed in at incredible speeds, and before he could move, one of them carved through his left wing, sending him spiraling towards the ground. "Mayday! Mayday! This is Major Lombardi, I am going down! Bailing out over the residential district!"

The channel was filled with static as Falco grunted, pulling his ejection lever. An explosion resounded through the comm as his seat blasted free. Fox looked down as he saw a chute erupt from the blue dot that was his wing man. "Falco's chute is out! He's alright!"

The ship passed through the flight as they were watching Falco eject. Fox turned in time to see a crescent on the wing. "The crescent fighter...you're real...Everybody, get out of here. It's Solomon!"

Fox broke from the formation and chased after Solomon. "Are you coming for me, Star Fox team leader?" Fox grunted as he pulled in behind Solomon. "Yeah, and I'm gonna shoot you down!" Solomon laughed, hitting his afterburners and rocketing away. Fox saw a bomb dangling from the wing of Solomon's fighter. "What's the matter

Solomon? Can't drop your bomb?" Fox could tell he was going to use it on the Halcyon ground forces. It was big enough to be nuclear. "I'm going to destroy your army, but I'm going to destroy you first, _Colonel_"

Solomon looped up and around the Arwing, firing his lasers once he got in range. Fox could only pull hard on his flight stick and barrel rolled through the laser fire. Fox dipped towards the ground and screamed across the roads, skimming between buildings with Solomon hot on his tail. Solomon began to close in, pushing his fighter to it's limit to catch up, when suddenly Fox pulled a left and disappeared between a pair of buildings.

Cursing, Solomon looked down. Fox had disappeared from his radar. He began to pull up from the street level when his ship jumped, causing him to look around. Fox was behind him, unleashing a hail of lasers at him.

Fox heard the comm channel open. "Colonel McCloud and Solomon have disappeared from radar, this is a battle between aces." Solomon continued to take damage before he peeled away towards the Halcyon armored column, the bomb on his wing slowly lowering onto the firing point. _Oh no, he's going to drop the bomb!_ Fox gunned his engines and continued to hammer the enemy fighter with his lasers. Solomon's left wing broke off, and an engine exploded. The plane tilted up, exposing the cockpit. Fox changed his firing position to aim at the cockpit, flooding it with laser fire as he spotted a figure fly from the cockpit, mangled and burned.

"This is Colonel McCloud. I've shot down Solomon, he didn't get to-" Fox stopped short as he saw the bomb that had been hanging from Solomon's wing. It was heading directly for the column. "No!"

Fox began firing even faster at the bomb, then time started slowing down as he saw lasers start to hit it. The third strike caused the bomb to explode. Fox felt the explosion, the shockwave causing him to spin out of control and hurtle towards the ground.

He yanked on the stick as hard as he could, trying desperately to regain control. He saw the altimeter dropping as he nosed towards the ground. This was his chance to recover. He pulled back and the nose went skyward, the engines flaring as they went into overdrive to try to keep the ship off the ground. Fox's eyes were on the altimeter the whole time he tried to push away from the ground. The numbers dropped quickly. 200. 150. 100. 50. 40. 30. 20.

The altimeter stopped dropping and began to stop, then went back up again. It had stopped at 3. He had been 3 meters from crashing into the ground.

Fox tried to slow his breathing as he rejoined the rest of his wing. He eventually found them and joined their formation. Nobody said anything as they went to a nearby airport to land. It had been captured by the advancing Halcyon army.

Fox sighed softly as he finally stopped hyperventilating. The sky was clear, and his battle was over.

**(Transition)**

John stopped at the edge of the forest, the capital building filling his sight. He saw Serpentis soldiers filing out of the building and lowering their weapons to the ground. He could see UNSC Marines policing the weapons. What had happened? Had they surrendered?

One of the marines jogged over. "Hey Chief! They surrendered when their leader got shot down! Luck for us, eh?" John looked back at the serpentis soldiers getting policed.

John looked skyward as the blue sky was filled with capital ships, each of them firing off 3 salvos in unison.

The battle for Corneria was over, and they had won.

__**Hey guys! This book is almost done! There will be one more chapter for book 1 and then it'll be completed. I hope you enjoyed the extremely long chapter compared to the rest of the story. I originally wanted to have this up on Christmas day, but I didn't hve it finished yet. Anyway, hope you guys enjoyed this! -Great Fox MK3**

19. A bright new day conclusion to book 1

Who's ready for the last chapter in book one? You guys have stayed with me this long, and now you're gonna find out where they go from here. Of course they're gonna go into book two, but does anybody know what's gonna happen in this meticulous book two? Nope :3 So just read through this chapter and you'll get hurtled into the next book!

The squadron hovered over the city as supply ships came from low orbit, dropping off consumables and anything else the ground forces would need for the month long occuptaion to weed out any Serpentis military personnel. Fox looked to his left and could just barely make out the smoldering remains of Solomon's ship almost a kilometer away.

Falco had been shot down, but he had been able to pull his nose up at the last second and skid across the road, tearing the belly out of his Arwing and totaling it, but allowing him to escape with only a few cuts and bruises from the canopy shattering on impact and the kinetic force of the ship hitting the ground.

Fox turned in his ship and did a head count. 1, 2 ,3 ,4 ,5 ,6, 7...but where was 8? Panther wasn't on the radar and he couldn't see his ship. "Wolf, have you seen Panther?"

The Lupine sighed, and Fox could hear it over the comm. "Fox, Panther hasn't been with us since the battle started...Let's land somewhere, then I'll be able to recall what happened." The six remaining ships hovered lazily to the nearest airport "€" the one where all of this had started for Fox, the original military ball hangar was still adorned with ribbons, so they parked their fighters in it.

Fox looked around and got a ship count. One, two, three, four, five, six...there were only six fighters in the hangar. Falco was the only person that had been shot down...and everybody else was here except...Panther. Fox called around to the others. "Hey, anybody seen Panther?"

Wolf stepped out from under the shadow of his Wolfen. "He didn't make it, and I can't explain what happened." Krystal stepped forward. "I can get a visual out to all of us if you can concentrate hard enough. Hold your hands out, palms down." Wolf did as he was told, Krystal putting her hands under his.

As soon as Krystal did it, she froze completely, Wolf did as well. Their eyes began to glow an intense white. A blueish aura emerged from their hands. It took on the image of what looked to be the hangar from the ship they were in right before the battle.

Fox stood there, next to the black hull of a Wolfen. "Take care, Wolf, and try not to get shot down." With that, the vulpine turned and went to his own ship. As they all settled in and got ready for launch, the countdown came, and the ships rocketed out of the bay. They were watching everything...from Wolf's point of view. The battle progressed the same way it had really occurred, but when the Wolfens peeled off from the rest to attack the cruiser they had been designated, Wolf looked left and right, showing Panther and Leon rocketing across the ship, dodging flashes of red and blue. "Panther, be careful, you'll take too much and you won't make it."

He heard Panther snarl in the intercom. "Panther will make it, Panther will not get hit by the likes of this puny crui-" He was cut off as a streak of red hit him in the wing, and then, time seemed to slow down as another red streak erupted from a nearby cannon and pierced through Panther's ship, gutting it through the stomach and coming out of the cockpit. Wolf could barely see what remained of the feline past the flash from the explosions. The Wolfen spin away, out of control and still exploding. Wolf knew that his wingmate was dead the moment the shot pierced the canopy, but he had no time to grieve, as he received the call to go planet side.

The aura dissipated and left the hangar in silence. Nobody spoke, nobody moved. Fox looked at the ground for a moment. "Alright...we'll get a funeral for him along with the rest of our casualties. We need to rebuild, and strengthen our defenses in case this happens again. Our war is over...and we've got a new job coming our way." Fox looked outside. The sky was turning a slight orange color. Krystal stood next to Fox, smiling as he wrapped his arm around her waist. "A new day is on the horizon...My friends, thank you..."

****ALRIGHT. I KNOW IT TOOK FOREVER. I got sidetracked and everything. I'm gonna leave this on hiatus for a bit while I work on book number two and some other things. I've been consulting with a few friends on how everything's gonna play out. Also, sorry for the extremely short chapter, but I just wanted to finish up and get book one on the shelf. Anyway, keep looking forward to the next book, and it'll be out soon enough!****

****Great Fox MK3****

20. Thoughts?

****Hey guys, I've been thinking a lot lately...but what would you guys think if I went back and rewrote this? Made it revolve more around Star Fox, and by more...I mean completely. I dunno...I'd like to see you guys's opinions on this thought. I mean, if you guys don't want**

me to, we'll continue on like this, but if you want me to change it to be what it originally was supposed to be, I'd like to know, because I'm kind of falling off the halo train of thought...so just tell me what you guys think. - Great Fox MK3**

21. Chapter 21

Alright. The Omega Chronicles is getting a second wind. I decided to cut Halo out of the equation and make this a full on Star Fox story. I don't know why, I just feel as if the Halo was out of my forte. Anyway, I'm gonna be rewriting this completely. The old version is still going to be up, but I don't think I'll be updating it anymore. If anybody wants to try and finish it, then be my guest, just message me first and at least give me a sample of how you write so I can determine if I'm letting it into good hands.

End
file.